HISTORY OF AMERICAN ORATORY

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Oratory holds up the mirror to history. It is through the speech of our great statesmen—calm or passionate, gravely judicial or fired to white heat with suffering—that we can see the colorful panorama of history reflected in the words of those who made that history.

It was Patrick Henry, "the forest-born American Demosthenes," who was the first great orator of the new American school. Then came the versatile and brilliant Alexander Hamilton; Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, John Calhoun, and Thomas Corwin followed, each a tremendous figure in our development. We see Wendell Phillips, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ward Beecher, Bryan, Beveridge, Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson.

Mr. Shaw writes vigorously, concisely, and with a wealth of historical detail. In his wonderfully balanced treatment, he shows us the salient points in the life of each of our great American statesmen, how each one developed as a personality, and how his convictions influenced history.

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History of American Oratory

By

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26-11645

Printed in the United States of America

PREFACE

The American people have always been ardent admirers of genuinely great oratory; and never since colonial times have they been without magnetic leaders, who, by word of mouth, could guide their deliberations and mould their conduct in each successive crisis of their history.

Few nations, in fact, have had a history so prolific in masterpieces of oratorical literature; for certainly not Greece, not Rome, not France, not Great Britain or Ireland has produced a body of oratory more vast or more admirable.

By the power of oratory, to an extent unmeasured and immeasurable, the American people were led to declare their independence of Great Britain; by the same means, they were led to establish their Constitution; and similarly by the same means, they were led to defend their rights in the War of 1812. Through the influence of orators, they were led to formulate their foreign policy, and to determine whether they were a loose confederacy or a strong centralized government at home. Oratory had its part to play in the great westward movement of expansion, and in the terrific struggle for the abolition of slavery. The Civil War was fought behind the lines by men of eloquence as well as by men of action, and the great problems of reconstruction were solved by men whose voices rang throughout the land. Orators were conspicuous in the agitation for imperialism, for populistic and progressive reform, for participation in the World War, and for international co-operation to promote world peace. In all these movements the power of eloquence was one of the great dynamic forces behind the decisions of the people.

The appeals made by orators in each of these important

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periods and epochs of American history are part of the vast body of permanent American literature. They are to-day as capable of imparting knowledge, of arousing enthusiasm, of stirring patriotism, as when they were first uttered.

Yet how neglected they have been, even by students of public speaking, and by specialists in historical research! And why? Because as published separately in the works of individual orators or in compendiums of oratory, or as published in the form of selections containing only purple patches of eloquence, they are utterly incomprehensible.

To understand oratory, not only the text, but also the full historical and biographical setting, must be given; for, as Webster says: "True eloquence consists in the man, the subject, and the occasion."

On that theory, this *History of American Oratory* has been written to give the full setting for each masterpiece of oratory, to bring back to life all the contending forces with which the orator had to grapple, and to introduce the effective portions of each speech as a fitting climax for the action of the plot.

By this novel method of treatment, the author hopes, not only that he has made many of the best specimens of the literature of American oratory intelligible to the lay reader, but also that he has done something to inspire patriotism, to promote emulation of high ideals in public address, and to perpetuate the memory of those who have exalted American eloquence to the level of world renown.

W. C. S.

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HISTORY OF AMERICAN ORATORY

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CHAPTER I

PATRICK HENRY

Orators and Oratory of the Revolution

The first great age of oratory in America occurred during the period of the American Revolution. There had been, of course, great eloquence heard in America before this period, especially from the pulpits of the early Puritan clergy of New England, and during the remarkable religious revivals of 1735 and 1741 conducted by Jonathan Edwards throughout New England, and by George Whitefield in all the colonies from the outlying districts of Maine to the remote settlements of Georgia; but such eloquence was in no sense characteristically American: it might have been uttered in any part of the English-speaking world. Such eloquence, moreover, left no permanent literature that is capable of stirring the hearts and souls of modern generations. It could not create a golden age of oratory, but it could prepare the way for such an age in the succeeding period of the Revolution.

Between the years 1761 and 1776, which may be said to constitute roughly the Revolutionary period of American oratory, a new spirit began to stir in the colonies—the spirit of resistance against British oppression—and this spirit gave rise, among lawyers and statesmen, to a new school of American eloquence, which has left its imprint upon all succeeding generations.

The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) by which England crushed the rival claims of France to dominion in the New World had not yet been concluded when this spirit of resistance began to assert itself. England wished America to bear its full share of the financial burden occasioned by this war; but, indiscreetly, she attempted in 1761 to make America pay its part by enforcing her revenue laws with writs of assistance to be applied in searching for, and in seizing, smuggled goods. Again, she tried in 1765 to collect revenue by a stamp tax, levied without colonial approval; and, failing in this, she tried other forms of taxation, which finally were reduced under pressure to the odious tax on tea. All efforts to tax the colonies by parliamentary enactments failed, and troops were sent over to intimidate the people. These troops caused the fateful Boston Massacre in 1770, and contributed to the irritation of the colonies, three years later in 1773, when they showed their determination to resist the tax on tea by throwing a ship-load of that commodity into Boston harbor. Then came the British acts of reprisal: the closing of the port of Boston, the withdrawal of colonial charters, the establishment of arbitrary governments by royal governors, and the despatching of more troops to be stationed throughout the colonies. The colonists in turn began to organize; Continental Congresses were summoned; colonial militias were organized; hostilities began; and, after a year of warfare, the resistance to Great Britain became by proclamation an avowed struggle for independence.

These successive acts in the drama of the Revolution produced in each instance a fresh outburst of impassioned patriot eloquence. James Otis of Massachusetts made himself famous in his plea, *Against Writs of Assistance;* Samuel Adams, John Adams, Josiah Quincy, Jr., Joseph Warren, and John Hancock of Massachusetts, all attained fame for eloquence in addresses

on the subject of the Boston Massacre; William Henry Drayton and John Rutledge of South Carolina won fame by boldly exhorting their fellow-citizens in 1776 to maintain their independence; and, a few weeks later, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia and John Adams of Massachusetts gave utterance to words of undying eloquence in urging upon the Continental Congress the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

Among these orators of the Revolution, however, one spokesman stands out pre-eminently—one who entered the lists almost as early as James Otis of Massachusetts, one who began by defying the power of the king to annul the laws of Virginia in the famous *Parsons' Cause* in 1763, one who took a foremost part in the agitation for resistance to the Stamp Act in 1765, and one who reached the very pinnacle of Revolutionary eloquence in exhorting Virginia to take up arms and prepare for war in the early spring of 1775, just before the breaking out of hostilities on the battlefields of Lexington and Concord.

The greatest of all Revolutionary orators, in America's first golden age of eloquence, was the Virginian patriot, Patrick Henry, who, for his overwhelming and torrential powers of oratory, was known to his contemporaries as the "forest-born American Demosthenes."

The Life of Patrick Henry

By common consent, Patrick Henry is acknowledged to have been the most consummate orator of the Revolution in America. To him, largely, we owe the first great agitation in Virginia against the British usurpation of colonial rights. To him, in large measure, we owe the conviction among patriots that the colonies must make common cause against British

aggression. And to him, in large measure, we owe the determination of patriots throughout the colonies to meet force with force and maintain on the field of battle those rights which the British ministry were trampling under foot. In the cause of the Revolution, he, of course, did not speak alone; for many another orator had taken the rostrum to arouse the people. But, while other orators were being heard by their own immediate audiences and within the limits of their own individual colonies, Henry was heard always, though speaking in Virginia, throughout the length and breadth of the continent.

This conspicuous orator of the Revolution was born at Studley, Hanover County, Virginia, in 1736. He was thus considerably younger than Samuel Adams and James Otis, about the same age as John Adams and John Hancock, and considerably older than Joseph Warren and Josiah Quincy, Jr.

His family belonged to the respectable class of poorer planters, having no connection with the landed aristocracy of the colony, but having among their number many eminent clergymen. On his mother's side, Henry was related to the great Scotch historian, William Robertson; and, on his father's side, to the great English orator, lawyer, and statesman, Lord Brougham.

Henry had little schooling except under the tutelage of an uncle, a clergyman; and, throughout his boyhood, he was always more fond of hunting and fishing than of his books. Compared with John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, he was no scholar; but to call him ignorant would be a great injustice, for he had the happy faculty of going to the bottom of any subject by an over-night preparation.

Through sheer indolence, before he was twenty-four years of age, he had failed three times in small business undertakings, and members of his family were ashamed of him.

Then he began to study law, and with three weeks' preparation passed the bar examination on condition that he should devote himself to further study.

For three years he had a small pettifogging practice, until his great opportunity came in the *Parsons' Cause*. This case came up for trial in 1763. At that time the clergy of the established church in Virginia were suing their vestries for back pay on the ground that they had been defrauded under the laws of the colony by being paid in tobacco when tobacco was cheap and by being paid in colonial paper money when tobacco was high. The case was a desperate one, for the clergy had carried their case to the king and had obtained from the privy council an act of disallowance setting aside the colonial statutes. All that remained to be done, therefore, was to determine the amount of damages to be paid them. No lawyer could be found to oppose the clergy, and Henry was solicited to take the case as a last resort. When the case came to trial in the Hanover County Court House, Henry began his plea awkwardly, bringing upon himself both pity and shame; but, stung by his impending disgrace, he launched into a torrent of invective against the clergy and the king, that is said to have made the blood run cold.

"A king," he said, "by disallowing acts of a salutary nature, from being the father of his people, degenerates into a tyrant, and forfeits all right to his subjects' obedience." Murmurs of treason were raised, but the bench did not heed them; and Henry proceeded, saying that "it was the duty of the clergy to assist in securing obedience to the civil law. In this case they were thwarting it. They deserved to be driven from their posts, deprived of their livings, and punished with signal severity! If the jurors yielded to them, they were worthy of the shackles of slavery!"

When Henry had finished this speech, the clergy had fled from the court-room in terror. The case was closed. The jury reported nominal damages of one penny for the clergy, and the court refused a new trial. Scarcely had the verdict been rendered than Henry was seized by the immense throng and carried on their shoulders in triumph about the court-house green.

Henry's remarkable success in the *Parsons' Cause* brought him an election almost immediately to the House of Burgesses. In this body he attracted little notice until the crucial hour arrived for the discussion of proper measures to oppose the Stamp Act in 1765. No one expected Henry, of course, to take the lead in this discussion; for he was a raw recruit from the back country, and the legislature was filled with eminent statesmen of long service who had hitherto conducted its councils with wisdom and foresight. The horror of the House at seeing this back-woodsman take the helm, therefore, was almost unimaginable. Henry, however, had long before determined upon his course. Quickly rising from his seat, he seized the floor, without forewarning to the older members of the body; and, reading from the fly-leaf of an old law book, he placed before the House a series of seven resolutions denying the right of Parliament to lay taxes on the colonies and declaring any who would assist in the imposition of such taxes an enemy to his majesty's colonies.

The debate that followed the introduction of these resolutions has been described as "most bloody"; and, in the midst of the fray, Henry ejaculated those words that have gone ringing down the ages: "Caesar had his Brutus; Charles the First, his Cromwell; and George the Third—." Here he was interrupted by shouts of "Treason!" from all sides; but, when order was restored, he continued,—"and George the Third may

profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it!" The debate raged on for two days; but, in the end, Patrick Henry won by a majority of a single vote, which brought from his distinguished opponent, Peyton Randolph, an oath that he would have given five hundred guineas for just that one vote. The assembly afterwards, in Henry's absence, tried to soften the effect of the resolutions, but their efforts were futile. The story of Henry's triumph had gone forth throughout the colonies, and the whole country was aflame with admiration for the man and with a fierce determination to make good his brilliant utterance.

Henceforth, Patrick Henry was considered as a power to be reckoned with. He rapidly assumed a position of virtual dictatorship in the proceedings of the Virginia legislature; and this position of power he continued to hold for a period of thirty years. In 1774 and 1775 Henry was a delegate from Virginia to the First and Second Continental Congresses, in Philadelphia, where, at the first session, he made a profound impression by his declaration that: "The distinctions between Virginians, New Yorkers, and New Englanders are no more. I am not a Virginian, but an American."

In 1775, he delivered before the Revolutionary Convention at Richmond his greatest speech, *The Call to Arms;* and in 1776, he became the first governor of Virginia as an independent State. In this capacity, he served five terms, from 1776 to 1779, and from 1784 to 1786, through two of the most trying periods of the State's history. In 1796, he was elected to this office again; but, at this time, he declined to serve.

When the Federal Constitution was placed before the ratifying conventions of the various States, Henry became one of its chief opponents; and, in the Virginia Convention of 1788,

he conducted the most bitter fight of his lifetime to prevent its adoption.

For this act in opposition to the general trend of history, Henry has been most ungenerously misrepresented and maligned. Yet, in this opposition, he displayed some of his most transcendent powers of oratory, to promote what he conscientiously believed to be a righteous cause; namely, the preservation of liberty even at the cost of sacrificing a stronger federal union.

Hardly had the ratifying convention become organized, when Patrick Henry dashed into the fray with all the spirit of a cavalry leader at the head of a charge; and then, having placed himself at the forefront of the battle, Henry maintained himself there for twenty-three consecutive days, until the convention adjourned. During all but five days of the session, he directed assault after assault against his opponents, never once abating his fury nor tiring in his efforts. On many days, he made three speeches; on one day, five; and on another eight. During one of these addresses, he spoke without interruption for seven hours, to use his own words, "in the language of his soul." No weapon of attack or defense was too unwieldy to daunt him, and no missile was too diminutive to be despised. To every interest and to every prejudice, he made his appeal. "If at times he soared like the eagle, and seemed, like the bird of Jove, to be armed with thunder, he did not disdain to stoop, like the hawk, to seize upon his prey." For a moment's advantage in debate, he converted life-long friends into bitter enemies; and, throughout the entire struggle, he refused to be bound by rules intended to make the discussion orderly. Against all the taunts and reproaches and demands of his adversaries, he insisted upon keeping his broad assaults always in the vague regions of general principles and impend-

ing calamity, rather than considering the precise language of the new instrument of government. So violent, indeed, were some of his expressions, that one of his opponents was induced to burlesque his style and afterwards to suggest to him that, if he didn't like this government, he might go and live among the Indians.

The very height of Henry's eloquence was reached, perhaps, on the day before the final vote was taken; when, half realizing that his cause was lost, he gathered up all his energies for a last appeal. The scene on that day has thus been described by an eye-witness: "The orator," says this witness, "as if wielding an enchanter's wand, suddenly enlarged his arena of debate and the number of his auditors; for, peering beyond the veil which shuts in mortal sight and pointing to those celestial beings who were hovering over the scene, he addressed to them an invocation that made every nerve shudder with supernatural horror; when, lo! a storm at that instant rose which shook the whole building, and the spirits whom he had evoked seemed to have come at his bidding. Availing himself of the incident with a master's art, he seemed to mix in the fight of his ethereal auxiliaries, and rising on the wings of the tempest to seize upon the artillery of heaven and direct its fiercest thunders against the heads of his adversaries. The scene became insupportable, and the House rose without the formality of adjournment, the members rushing from their seats with precipitation and confusion.

The next day, the vote was taken. Though, at the beginning, Henry's opponents had had a majority of fifty, they were able at this time to muster only a slender majority of ten, the vote standing as 89 for the adoption of the Constitution and 79 for its rejection.

At no time in Patrick Henry's life could he have shown

greater nobility of character than at this moment of tremendous defeat. More than one person suspected him of sinister designs to lead his discontented forces into a movement of secession. He, however, allayed all such fears, while yet clinging tenaciously to all that he had advocated, when in his last speech before the final vote was taken, he rose to say in the most solemn and unaffected language:

"I beg pardon of this House for having taken more time than came to my share, and I thank them for the patience and polite attention with which I have been heard. If I shall be in the minority, I shall have those painful sensations which arise from a conviction of being overpowered in a good cause. Yet I will be a peaceable citizen. My head, my hand, and my heart shall be at liberty to retrieve the loss of liberty, and remove the defects of that system in a constitutional way. I wish not to go to violence, but will wait, with hopes that the spirit which predominated in the Revolution is not yet gone, nor the cause of those who are attached to the Revolution yet lost. I shall therefore patiently wait in the expectation of seeing that government changed, so as to be compatible with the safety, liberty, and happiness of the people."

True to his word, Patrick Henry did remain a peaceable citizen. He returned, however, to the Virginia legislature, where his slightest word was law, and secured the election of Senators for Congress who were pledged to amend the Constitution. Then he divided the State into such Congressional districts that, perforce, the Representatives in Congress from Virginia were almost unanimously in favor of amendments also; and by this means, in spite of defeat, he succeeded ultimately in getting part of what he demanded—namely, the passage of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, which ever since have been called the American *Bill of Rights*.

Only twice after Henry's appearance in the ratifying convention of Virginia did he thereafter attract national notice by his eloquence: once, at the trial of the *British Debts Case,* before the Federal Court at Richmond in 1791, when he brought from a justice of the Supreme Court, this ejaculation, "Gracious God! He *is* an orator indeed!"—and again, in the political campaign of 1799, the year of his death, when, as a tottering old man, he undertook, at Charlotte, Virginia, to defend Washington's policies against the disunion sentiment that was then being voiced by orators of the younger generation like John Randolph.

On the occasion of this last speech, Henry is said to have exclaimed: "Where is the citizen of America who will dare to lift his hand against the father of his country?" A drunken man in the crowd threw up his arm and said he dared to do so; whereupon, Henry turned, rose aloft in all his majesty, fixed the man in his eye, and said: "No; you dare not do it! In such a parricidal attempt, the steel would drop from your nerveless arm!"

Scarcely three months after these words were uttered, in June 1799, Patrick Henry died on his estate at Red Hill, Virginia. His life had been filled full of dramatic incidents, great victories, and crushing defeats; but, through it all, he had appeared to be always a man, like Lincoln, *from the people,* inspired with a single, great political ideal *for the people,* and endowed by nature with the most consummate eloquence of his time for delivering his message *to the people.*

Though Henry's reputation has suffered somewhat among succeeding generations because of his opposition to the adoption of the Federal Constitution, he holds, nevertheless, an exalted place of veneration in the hearts of all Americans for his matchless eloquence in behalf of liberty during the early

struggles of the Revolution. At that time, political leaders vied with one another in bestowing upon him extravagant encomiums, some going so far as to call him "the first man on this continent, as well in abilities as in virtues,"—and even Thomas Jefferson, his quondam friend, was forced to say of him that "after all, he was our leader in the measures of the Revolution in Virginia; and, in that respect, more is due him than to any other person."

Historical Setting of Henry's Call to Arms

Henry's speech, *The Call to Arms,* is universally recognized as one of the greatest triumphs in the history of the world's oratory. It was delivered on the 23rd day of March, 1775, in the Revolutionary Convention of Virginia, assembled in St. John's Church at Richmond, and is spoken of commonly among historians, as "Patrick Henry's personal declaration of war against Great Britain."

It was occasioned by the fact that, since the meeting of the First Continental Congress, and in consequence of that body's recommendations, militia companies had everywhere been organized throughout the colonies in all the different counties with the purpose of placing the country in a position to defend itself against further aggression; and Patrick Henry, by a series of resolutions similar to those passed in other colonies, had sought to have the Virginia convention assume authority, for that colony, over the militia companies that had already been organized in the counties of Virginia.

He considered the introduction of these resolutions merely as a matter of routine business, and he never dreamed that they would meet with the slightest opposition. His surprise was great, therefore, when he saw, in that outlawed convention,

the perfect storm of opposition that was raised by the whole phalanx of conservative leaders who had formerly controlled the policies of the government. These men, including Bland, Harrison, Pendleton, and Nicholas, were frankly afraid of an open rupture with Great Britain. They also hated Henry for the previous defeats he had administered to them; and they regarded him as a dangerous demagogue, who had little to lose in the event of war, and who, by his rash leadership, would bring the colonies to the very brink of ruin. For hours, therefore, they held the floor against Henry, bringing the whole weight of their united efforts to defeat his resolutions, until at last it seemed as if his measures had been crushed at their very birth.

Had any other man than Henry been in control of the radical element in the convention, he would have made his peace with the incensed majority, and humbly asked leave to withdraw his resolutions; but the posture in which his cause stood gave Henry only greater scope for his amazing powers. Staggering under defeat, he marshalled all his forces, and without premeditation delivered his great speech.

Henry rose on this occasion with unwonted dignity and self-possession. He did not stumble as usual through an awkward exordium, but came calmly and deliberately to his points. The only indication that he was suffering deep emotion was in the unearthly flash and glow of his dark blue eyes beneath their shaggy brows. As he approached his conclusion, however, his eyes gathered greater fire, his voice became shrill, and the tendons of his neck stood out like whip-cords. The faces of his auditors became pallid with sympathetic emotion; their eyes glared in response to his; and their bodies craned forward to catch his slightest word or gesture.

When, at last, he uttered the resounding words, "We must

fight," it seemed as if a hand had written on the wall to announce the nation's doom; the building seemed to shake and rock under the thunderous vibrations of his voice. Stooping in the attitude of a condemned galley-slave, bowed to the earth with fetters, he said, "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?"—and lifting his eyes to heaven, he exclaimed, "Forbid it, Almighty God!" Then turning to the timid loyalists, he said, hissing through his teeth, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me,"—exultingly throwing up his hands as if bursting his fetters,—"give me liberty or give me death!"

In uttering these last words, Henry struck his breast as with a dagger, and his speech sounded like the exhortation of a leader who is turning the rout of battle. No murmurs arose. There was no applause. Every man was sick with excitement. Every eye gazed fixedly on the speaker, and the spell was not broken even when he had taken his seat. One word from him would have turned the whole assembly to deeds of violence. Then several members rose together from their seats, and on their lips were quivering the words, "To arms! To arms!"

By this speech, Henry had turned the tide of battle. Not only did the convention pass his resolutions; but even his opponents became enthusiastic in their support, and one of them rising in his place urged that, instead of arming the militia, ten thousand regulars be raised for war.

Patrick Henry: The Call to Arms

March 23, 1775

No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same

subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony.

The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfil the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason toward my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those, who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry, for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the

House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourself to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation; the last arguments to which kings resort.

I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains, which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find, which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done everything that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remon-

strances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free—if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending—if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot?

Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature has placed in our power. Three millions of people armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to

desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, "Peace, peace"—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

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2. Jonathan Mayhew: *Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance* (1750)—See Thornton's *Pulpit of the American Revolution* (1860) 53-104.
3. James Otis: *Against Writs of Assistance* (1761)—See Minot's *History of Massachusetts* (1798); Tudor's *James Otis* (1823) 63-68; Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) I, 4-7; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 11-17; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) VIII, 27-36.
4. Jonathan Mayhew: *The Repeal of the Stamp Act* (1766)—See excerpt in Tudor's *James Otis,* 146-147.
5. Samuel Adams: *Address to Governor Hutchinson* (1770)—See Hosmer's *S. Adams* (1885) 155-156.
6. Josiah Quincy, Jr.: *Defense of the British Soldiers* (1770)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 336-345; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) III, 129-143.

7. John Adams: *Defense of the British Soldiers* (1770)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 235-247; Brewer I, 47-56.
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11. John Rutledge: *Address to the South Carolina Assembly* (1776)—See Force's *American Archives* (1844) Vol. 5, 4th Series, 650-651; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 120-121.
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13. Richard Henry Lee: *For the Declaration of Independence* (1776)—Carlo Botta's *History of the War of Independence of U. S. A.* (Italian text, 1809-'10; translated by G. A. Otis of Boston, 1826); reprint in Magoon's *Orators of the American Revolution* (1848) 269-275.
14. John Adams: *Supposed Speech on the Declaration of Independence* (1776) —See Webster's *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson* (1826) in *Works of Webster* (1853) I, 109-148.

Note: Concerning the oratory listed above, the student should be cautioned that Otis's speech was pieced together from notes by John Adams in 1798; that Samuel Adams's speech to Governor Hutchinson was pieced together from fragmentary reports of John Adams, Gov. Hutchinson, Lt. Gov. Oliver, and Colonel Dalrymple; that John Hancock's speech was actually delivered by him but was written perhaps by Samuel Adams; that Patrick Henry's *Call to Arms* was pieced together from numerous reports by William Wirt in 1817; that Richard Henry Lee's speech was the work of the imaginative Italian historian, Carlo Botta, in 1809; and that John Adams's speech on the Declaration of Independence was the product of Daniel Webster's historical imagination in 1826. The other speeches by Edwards, Mayhew, Quincy, J. Adams, Joseph Warren, John Rutledge, and William Henry Drayton are well authenticated.

The student should also be cautioned that a speech ascribed to Samuel Adams on American Independence as of August 2, 1776, and printed in Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations,* in Depew's *Library of Oratory,* in Bryan's *World's Famous Orations,* and in Brewer's *World's Best Orations,* as well as in many other texts, is denounced by Wells in his biography of Samuel Adams as a clever London forgery.

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Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Henry's *The Call to Arms*

I. What was the meaning of Henry's expression, *temporal salvation?*
II. What internal evidence is there that Henry was a careless student of the *Odyssey?*

III. Who were the gentlemen who had just addressed the house?

IV. What were: (1) the late petition to which Henry referred; (2) the martial array to which he referred?

V. What external evidence is there: (1) that Henry was guilty of an anachronism when he said, "The war is actually begun." (2) that Henry's expression, "Give me liberty, or give me death," was not mere opera bouffe?

VI. How accurate were Henry's implied analogies in his expressions: (1) "Suffer not yourself to be betrayed with a kiss." (2) "Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston."

Dictionary Studies from Patrick Henry

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. extenuate 2. formidable 3. illusion 4. inestimable 5. inevitable 6. insidious 7. moment 8. subjugation 9. supplication 10. tyrannical.

CHAPTER II

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Oratory on the Adoption of the Constitution

The year 1788 will long be remembered as a most brilliant epoch in the history of the world's oratory; for, in that year, on one side of the Atlantic, English-speaking people were listening breathlessly to the unparalleled eloquence of Burke and Sheridan in the impeachment proceedings against Warren Hastings; while, on the other side of the Atlantic, the whole population of America was being held spell-bound by the eloquence of its greatest statesmen in the debates of the State conventions for ratifying the Federal Constitution as a new instrument of government.

The years just prior to 1788 constitute a period in American history that was almost devoid of sublime oratory; for these years were devoted first to war and then to the bitter disillusionment of peace, which had promised much in respect to liberty and happiness, but developed, instead, licentiousness, poverty, disorder, and civil war.

The union of States that was established by the Articles of Confederation in 1777 was a wretched "rope of sand"; because it was a mere league of States without power to enforce its will either at home or abroad. It could not promote our foreign trade by the negotiation of commercial treaties, and it could not protect our shipping from capture by the Barbary pirates. It could not prevent States at home from waging commercial wars by tariffs and embargoes against one another, and it could not prevent States from engaging in actual armed conflict over disputed boundary lines. It could not even raise

money to pay off its own debts, and it could not prevent States from authorizing ruinous issues of paper money.

The result of this weak central government was soon felt in the disgrace of our representatives abroad, and in the utter stagnation of commerce, industry, and agriculture at home. Beginning with the mutiny of the Revolutionary soldiers demanding their pay in 1783, affairs soon drifted into anarchy over the disputed claims of Connecticut and Pennsylvania to the Wyoming Valley in 1784, and culminated in the terrifying Shays Rebellion of western Massachusetts in 1786.

These troubles caused responsible statesmen to ponder the necessity for establishing a stronger federal union; and, accordingly, the legislature of Virginia called a convention to meet at Annapolis in 1786 for the purpose of strengthening the power of the Confederation particularly in respect to commerce.

This convention accomplished little except to issue a call for another convention to meet the next year at Philadelphia with the object of making a thorough revision of the Articles of Confederation.

This second convention met at the appointed time; and, after sitting behind closed doors for four months in the summer of 1787, it finally drafted, and placed before the States for their approval, the Constitution of the United States.

Immediately, when the people had become familiar with the general features of this new instrument of government, a terrific struggle arose throughout the country between those who advocated its adoption and those who advocated its rejection. Ratifying conventions in the various states were authorized; and the people, dividing into hostile camps, settled down to a series of bitter political campaigns and then to even more bitter parliamentary contests.

Delaware was the first State to ratify the new instrument of government. Then came Pennsylvania after a hard-fought battle, with Georgia, New Jersey, and Connecticut following shortly afterwards. Massachusetts was the sixth State to ratify after prolonged debate, that was even more bitter than that in the Pennsylvania convention. Then came Maryland and South Carolina, with New Hampshire, Virginia, and New York following tardily; while North Carolina and Rhode Island were left to straggle into the Union after the new government had been inaugurated.

The long series of debates held in these successive conventions gave to the world some of America's best specimens of parliamentary eloquence. In the Pennsylvania convention, for example, James Wilson, by his eloquent defense of the Constitution, won for himself in history great fame as an orator. In the Massachusetts convention, Fisher Ames, through his advocacy of the Constitution, laid the foundation for his future eminence as statesman and orator. In the South Carolina convention, John Rutledge and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, both Revolutionary heroes, again won distinction. And, in the Virginia convention, a great galaxy of orators displayed their eloquence, including John Marshall, Edmund Randolph, and James Madison for the Constitution, and Patrick Henry, who was a host in himself, against the Constitution.

In the New York convention the greatest orator of the epoch made his appearance. Against a background of minor orators, including John Jay and Robert R. Livingston who gave their support to the Constitution, and Melancton Smith who led the opposition, appeared Alexander Hamilton, the hero of the hour, to whom we are more indebted than to any other man for the ratification of the Constitution and the consequent establishment of the new Federal Union.

The Life of Alexander Hamilton

Alexander Hamilton cannot be called the father of the Constitution; but, like John Adams in respect to the Declaration of Independence, he may be called its chief proponent in the period of agitation for its adoption, and the "great colossus of debate" in the ratifying conventions that made this document the new instrument of government upon which our present Union is established.

This great leader of leaders among the Federalists during the early days of the Republic was not only an orator, but also a brilliant soldier, lawyer, statesman, and financier, who rose to distinction first in the Revolution, then in the conventions for framing and ratifying the Constitution, and finally in the cabinet during the administrations of Washington as President.

He was born on the Island of Nevis in the British West Indies in 1757. His extraordinary precocity was soon discovered by his employer; and, at the age of thirteen, he was left in charge of a considerable mercantile business. At the age of fifteen, he attracted widespread notice throughout the West Indies by a published description of a hurricane that had swept over the islands; and, as a result, his relatives determined to send him to America for a higher education. He entered King's College, now Columbia University, in New York City; and there, refusing to be confined within the regular curriculum, he read voluminously by himself on the subjects of finance, government, and politics.

At first, he had little sympathy with the Revolutionary agitation; but, during a brief visit to Boston sometime in the spring of 1774, he was fully converted to the patriot cause. In that year, when only seventeen years of age, he made his

début as a Revolutionary orator, by speaking more eloquently than any other orator at the Great Meeting in the Fields, just outside the limits of New York City, when the State determined, against the intrigues of the Tories, to send delegates to the First Continental Congress.

Hamilton's college course was cut short by the outbreak of hostilities. He could not remain in the quiet atmosphere of college while war was brewing; and, hence, he retired to organize, himself, a company of artillery. He soon attracted the favorable notice of General Nathaniel Greene, and this officer presented him to General Washington. From that time forward, he remained under the watchful and admiring eye of his commander-in-chief, serving through most of the war as his aide-de-camp. In the battles of Long Island and White Plains, he distinguished himself for the masterly manner in which he conducted his command; and later, in the campaigns of Trenton and Princeton, he won a reputation for being a daring and gallant officer. His last brilliant achievement in the war occurred at Yorktown, when, by permission of Washington, he led the assaulting columns that brought final victory to the American arms.

Before the treaty of peace was signed, Hamilton had begun to prepare himself for the practice of law; and, in one of his early cases, in 1784, he succeeded in placing himself at the head of the New York bar. This case involved a claim of a patriot widow against a rich Tory merchant to recover the rental of her property from him for the period when she had been forced into exile by the British occupation of New York during the war. The case was heard in the Mayor's Court of the city, amidst all the dilapidation caused by the recent occupation of the enemy; and Hamilton argued eloquently in defense of the Tory merchant. His success brought

him clients without number; but, at the same time, it made him most unpopular, and aroused certain patriot demagogues to threaten his assassination.

At about this time, Hamilton became an active member of the New York legislature; and then, as a member of the Continental Congress and as a collecter of revenue for the general government, he embarked on a study of the reforms necessary to strengthen the government under the Confederation. He was a member of the Annapolis Convention in 1786 and of the General Convention in 1787 for framing the Federal Constitution; and, in the latter body, though constantly undermined by his colleagues from New York, he exerted a powerful influence, chiefly by one speech that stimulated the convention to take advanced ground in seeking a high degree of centralization. This speech, incidentally, displayed more fully than any other speech the underlying principles of Hamilton's political philosophy; and of it, Gouverneur Morris has said, that it was "the ablest and most impressive he had ever heard."

When at last the Constitution was placed before the States for their approval, Hamilton became the foremost advocate of its adoption among all the speakers and writers throughout the country. With John Jay and James Madison, he produced the immortal *Federalist Papers,* he himself doing the great bulk of the writing; and in the New York ratifying convention of 1788, he, almost unaided, by a series of eloquent speeches, perhaps never excelled, turned defeat into victory, and secured the approval of his State for the new instrument of government.

Under the administration of Washington, Hamilton was chosen as the first Secretary of the Treasury; and, through his efforts, the finances of the country were brought out of chaos and established upon a sound and permanent basis. Of his achievement in this direction, Webster has said: "He smote

the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of the public credit and it sprang upon its feet. The fabled birth of Minerva from the brain of Jove was hardly more sudden or more perfect than the financial system of the United States as it burst from the conception of Alexander Hamilton."

In 1795, Hamilton retired from the cabinet, but continued until the end to be the great leader of leaders in the Federalist party. When the Jay Treaty was under violent discussion, he defended it in a speech before a mob in New York City that pelted him with stones; and in the same year he is credited with writing the principal part of Washington's *Farewell Address,* which ever since has remained one of the chief corner-stones of American foreign policy.

Thereafter, he ceased to be prominent in the public service, except as he was made, at Washington's request, the acting head of the army under Washington, when, in 1798, the army was organized for war with France.

Throughout the latter years of Hamilton's life, he remained the undisputed head of the New York bar; and, in 1804, he delivered what is considered his greatest masterpiece in the field of forensic oratory, while defending Henry Croswell in a libel suit that involved Thomas Jefferson as President of the United States, and which, upon appeal, was carried to the Supreme Court at Albany. In this speech, says Rufus Choate, he "engraved on our minds, as with a pen of steel, the doctrine, that truth from right motives, for justifiable ends, might be safely written of everybody, high or low." That speech, Choate goes on to say, "was made to a bench of judges. It was made to an audience of lawyers and educated men; and I have heard that tears unbidden—silence that held his breath to hear applause unrepressed—murmurs not loud, but deep—marked its magic and its power."

The same year that marks this great triumph at the bar also marks the last sad incident in Hamilton's life. For years, Hamilton and Aaron Burr had been political and professional opponents; and for years, Hamilton had looked with suspicion on all Burr's motives, and had checked him successfully in many of his political aspirations. He had prevented him from becoming a minister abroad, from becoming President of the United States, and finally from becoming governor of New York. Many times Hamilton had spoken of Burr as a despicable character; and at last Burr could stand it no longer. He challenged Hamilton to a duel, and Hamilton accepted in accordance with the code of honor that then prevailed, because he feared that otherwise he could never again exert a useful influence on public affairs. The story of the duel is well known. Burr fired, and Hamilton reserved his shot; but Burr had aimed to kill, and Hamilton fell mortally wounded. On the following day, the 12th of July, 1804, Hamilton's life slowly ebbed away; and when his death came, the nation was plunged into universal mourning, such as it has seldom experienced, except perhaps at the time of the assassination of Lincoln or of Garfield.

Many remarkable eulogies of Hamilton followed, one by Eliphalet Nott, and one by Harrison Gray Otis; but the most remarkable among them was that of Gouverneur Morris who spoke like Antony over the dead body of Caesar.

Of Alexander Hamilton, it has been said that no other man in American public life has been so versatile and at the same time so pre-eminently successful in every field of endeavor upon which he chose to enter; for he was not merely a great orator and a great lawyer: he was also the ablest political and constitutional writer of his day, a good soldier, and the most capable, ingenious, and practical administrator of his time.

It was Hamilton who established the financial system of the United States; it was he who, with John Marshall, established the doctrine of a liberal interpretation of the Constitution on the basis of implied powers; it was he who, with George Washington, devised an enduring foreign policy for the United States; and it was he who, before the days of Clay and Webster, laid the broad foundations of nationalism, which were to prevail eventually against the narrow doctrine of sectionalism and State rights.

Both friend and foe have united in admiration of his superb qualities as a leader of men. His fellow-officers in the Revolution bestowed upon him the title of "The Little Lion"; and Jefferson delighted to call him the "Great Colossus of the Federalists." Talleyrand compared him with Charles James Fox and Napoleon Bonaparte. Chief-Justice Marshall ranked him as second only to Washington; and Chancellor Kent spoke of him as like Papinian. "Compared with his associates," said Kent, "he left them all far behind with a long interval between."

Historical Setting for Hamilton's Speeches to the New York Convention

Hamilton's fame, as an advocate before the courts, would in itself justify the inclusion of his name in any list of America's foremost orators; but his greatest triumph came, nevertheless, in a widely different field, that of parliamentary oratory, during the sessions of the New York convention for ratifying the Federal Constitution.

In that body, Hamilton appeared as the great champion of the new form of government, and there conducted for week after week one of the most desperate battles against over-

whelming odds that has ever been known in the history of American parliamentary oratory, until, at last, by the sheer force of his reasoning and his eloquence, he secured the adhesion of his State to the new Federal Union.

When the ratifying convention of New York began its deliberations on June 17, 1788, there was still a bare possibility that New York might be the ninth State to come in "under the new Federal roof," and thereby complete the number of States required for the organization of the new government. At this time the Constitution had been ratified by Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, and South Carolina. The convention of Virginia was still in the midst of its turbulent session, and New Hampshire had summoned its convention on the same day as that set for the convention of New York. All prospect of New York's becoming the ninth State to ratify, however, was destroyed by the long and protracted debates that took place in its convention. New Hampshire, after four days of discussion, came into the Union as the ninth State; and Virginia, four days afterward, as the tenth; so that New York became the eleventh and last State to ratify before the Constitution went into effect, leaving North Carolina and Rhode Island to come in after the government had been organized.

The importance of the struggle that took place in the New York convention was, in no way, diminished, however, by the fact that ten States had previously ratified; for the inclusion of New York in the new government was essential to any real union among the States. If New York stood aloof, a fatal rift would exist; and there was every prospect that this would be the case; for in no other State was the opposition so strong; and in no other State was the struggle more bitter.

The opponents of the Constitution were led by no other person than the doughty governor, George Clinton, one of the shrewdest politicians that New York ever produced. Nearly every office-holder belonged to his party, and four-sevenths of the people were counted among his followers. Through political intrigue and manipulation, he had almost prevented the summons for a convention altogether; and, when the convention was assembled, he had secured a majority of two-to-one against the adoption of the Constitution.

These men in Governor Clinton's party were supremely satisfied with the vicious system of State-sovereignty, and yet they were not wholly blind to its perils; for they did not wish to throw off all union with the other States. They were confident of the great future that their State must enjoy in consequence of its vast territory, its excellent water-ways, and its abounding resources; but they were so short-sighted in the exercise of their rights, that, by selfish discrimination against their neighbors in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Vermont, they had brought New York to the verge of war with these adjacent States. They despised union with the smaller States, and hoped to form some sort of fantastic confederation with the large non-ratifying States of Virginia and North Carolina. Then, when this hope failed, they planned to stand aloof, so that they might drive a sharp bargain as the price of their consent to join the Union.

The convention assembled at the old court-house in Poughkeepsie, midway between the stronghold of the supporters of the Constitution in New York City, and the stronghold of its opponents in Albany. There were in attendance sixty-five delegates, forty-six opposed to the Constitution, and only nineteen in its favor. Among the leading opponents were Governor Clinton, who presided; Yates and Lansing, who had balked

all Hamilton's efforts at the General Convention in Philadelphia; and Melancton Smith, who was one of the ablest debaters in the country. Among the leading advocates of the Constitution, were John Jay, the subsequent chief-justice; Robert R. Livingston, the State chancellor; and Alexander Hamilton, who stood head and shoulders intellectually above every other delegate in the convention.

Just as in the convention of Virginia the debates gradually simmered down to a gigantic contest between James Madison and Patrick Henry, so in the convention of New York they simmered down to a brilliant and prolonged struggle between Melancton Smith and Alexander Hamilton. Day after day, for hours at a stretch, Hamilton argued eloquently for the adoption of the Constitution, speaking without notes, from the full stores of his mind, and on a theme that he considered as of more moment than any other that would ever face the nation. His speeches were not such as school-boys love to declaim; yet, as Chancellor Kent has testified, on many occasions they wrung tears from friends and foes alike. So powerful, indeed, were his arguments, that, afterwards, he was accused of having blinded, hood-winked, and misled his opponents, to prevent their voting in accordance with their real convictions.

At first, the cause of Hamilton seemed desperate, and his only hope was to hold his following together, until, perhaps, favorable news might come from New Hampshire or Virginia. When, at last, the news did arrive, however, his prospects brightened with the gloom that came to his opponents. For a time, the opposition lagged and descended to petty bickering; and then, uniting on a program for conditional ratification, they brought on another mighty conflict. Hamilton, however, was prepared for this contingency; and, in the most brilliant

speech of the convention, which unhappily was not reported, converted to his views the chief speaker of the opposition.

No act in history has ever been more noble than the confession of Melancton Smith that, in open conflict, he had been convinced by the force of his opponent's reasoning that he should change sides on this stupendous question. The sudden conversion of Smith marked a turning in the tide. It came like the crashing of huge timbers in the demolition of a house. The whole structure of the opposition toppled over with the overthrow of its chief supporter, and a sufficient number from the majority came over to the minority, so that the convention voted 30 to 27 in favor of adopting the Constitution.

Of Hamilton's eloquence in securing this great victory, Senator Lodge has said: "It had none of the splendor which came to Pitt and Burke from their forum; none of the glitter of the gorgeous pageant which gathered in Westminster Hall to listen to the wrongs of the Begums; none of the national luster which encircled Ames when he shook Congress with dread at the prospect of war with England, or Clay when he denounced the Essex junto, or Webster when he upheld the cause of the Union. Yet, if we try Hamilton's speeches by the severest tests, by the conversion he wrought, by the sustained power, the readiness, fertility, and resource he displayed, and above all by results, this series of speeches in the New York convention deserves to rank with the highest triumphs of modern parliamentary oratory."

Alexander Hamilton: To the New York Convention June 20-28, 1788

The honorable gentleman [Chancellor Livingston] has been treated as having wandered in the flowery fields of fancy; and attempts have been made to take off from the minds of the

committee that sober impression which might be expected from his arguments. I trust, sir, that observations of this kind are not thrown out to cast a light air on this important subject, or to give any personal bias on the great question before us. I will not agree with gentlemen who trifle with the weaknesses of our country, and suppose that they are enumerated to answer a party purpose, and to terrify with ideal dangers. No. I believe these weaknesses to be real, and pregnant with destruction.

It appears to me extraordinary, that, while gentlemen in one breath acknowledge that the old Confederation requires many material amendments, they should, in the next, deny that its defects have been the cause of our political weakness, and the consequent calamities of our country. I cannot but infer from this, that there is still some lurking favorite imagination that this system, with correctness, might become a safe and permanent one.

We contend that the radical vice in the old Confederation is that the laws of the Union apply only to States in their corporate capacity. Has not every man who has been in our legislature experienced the truth of this position? There have ever been thirteen different bodies to judge of the measures of Congress; and the operations of government have been distracted by their taking different courses. Those States which were to be benefited have complied with requisitions; others have totally disregarded them.

Sir, if we have national objects to pursue, we must have national revenues. If we make requisitions, and they are not complied with, what is to be done? It has been observed, to coerce the States is one of the maddest projects that was ever devised. What picture does this idea present to our view? A complying State at war with a non-complying State; Con-

gress marching the troops of one State into the bosom of another; this State collecting auxiliaries, and forming, perhaps, a majority against its federal head. Here is a nation at war with itself. Can any reasonable man be well disposed towards a government which makes war and carnage the only means of supporting itself? The thing is a dream; it is impossible. The cure for this great evil is to enable the national laws to operate on individuals, in the same manner as those of the States do.

What, then, shall we do? Shall we take the old Confederation as a basis of a new system? Certainly not. To take the old Confederation and fashion it upon these principles, would be establishing a power which would destroy the liberties of the people. The fundamental principle of the old Confederation is defective; and we must totally eradicate and disregard this principle before we can expect an efficient government.

Suggestions, sir, of an extraordinary nature, have been frequently thrown out in the course of the present political controversy. It gives me pain to dwell on topics of this kind, and I wish they might be dismissed. We have been told that the old Confederation has proved inefficacious, only because intriguing and powerful men, aiming at a revolution, have been forever instigating the people, and rendering them disaffected with it. This, sir, is a false insinuation. The thing is impossible. I will venture to assert that no combination of designing men under heaven will be capable of making a government unpopular which is in its principles a wise and good one, and vigorous in its operations.

We have been told that the spirit of patriotism and love of liberty are almost extinguished among the people, and that it has become a prevailing doctrine that republican principles ought to be hooted out of the world. Sir, I am confident that

such remarks as these are rather occasioned by the heat of argument than by a cool conviction of their truth and justice. As far as my experience has extended, I have heard no such doctrine; nor have I discovered any diminution of regard for those rights and liberties, in defense of which the people have fought and suffered. There have been undoubtedly some men who have had speculative doubts on the subject of government; but the principles of republicanism are founded on too firm a basis to be shaken by a few speculative and skeptical reasoners.

It has been advanced as a principle that no government but a despotism can exist in a very extensive country. This is a melancholy consideration indeed. If it were founded on truth, we ought to dismiss the idea of a republican government, even for the State of New York. An assembly constituted for general purposes may be fully competent to every federal regulation, without being too numerous for deliberate conduct.

If the State governments were to be abolished, the question would wear a different face; but this idea is inadmissible. They are absolutely necessary to the system. Their existence must form a leading principle in the most perfect constitution we could form. I insist that it never can be the interest or the desire of the national legislature to destroy the State governments. The Union is dependent on the will of the State governments for its chief magistrate, and for its Senate. The blow aimed at the members must give a fatal wound to the head; and the destruction of the States must be at once a political suicide. Can the national government be guilty of this madness?

But imagine for a moment that a political frenzy should seize the government; suppose they should make the attempt.

Certainly, sir, it would be forever impracticable. In whatever direction popular weight leans, the current of power will flow; wherever the popular attachments lie, there will rest the political superiority. Sir, can it be supposed that the State will become the oppressors of the people? Will they forfeit their affections? Will they combine to destroy the liberties and happiness of their fellow-citizens, for the sole purpose of involving themselves in ruin? God forbid! The idea, sir, is shocking. It outrages every feeling of humanity, and every dictate of common sense.

Mr. Chairman, I shall not further enlarge upon this argument; my exertions have already exhausted me. I have persevered from an anxious desire to give the committee the most complete conception of this subject. I fear, however, that I have been not so successful as to bestow upon it that full and clear light of which it is susceptible.

I shall conclude with a few remarks by way of apology. I am apprehensive, sir, that, in the warmth of my feelings, I may have uttered expressions which were too vehement. If such has been my language, it was from the habit of using strong phrases to express my ideas; and, above all, from the interesting nature of the subject. I have ever condemned those cold, unfeeling hearts, which no object can animate. I condemn those indifferent mortals, who either never form opinions, or never make them known.

I confess, sir, that, on no subject, has my breast been filled with stronger emotions, or more anxious concern. If anything has escaped me, which may be construed into a personal reflection, I beg the gentlemen, once for all, to be assured that I have no design to wound the feelings of any who have opposed me.

While I am making these observations, I cannot but take

notice of some expressions which have fallen in the course of debate. It has been said that ingenious men may say ingenious things, and that those who are interested in raising the few upon the ruins of the many, may give to every cause an appearance of justice.

I know not whether these insinuations allude to the character of any who are present, or to any of the reasonings in this house. I presume that the gentlemen would not ungenerously impute such motives to those who differ from themselves. I declare I know not any set of men who are to derive peculiar advantages from this Constitution. Were any permanent honors or emoluments to be secured to the families of those who have been active in this cause, there might be some grounds for suspicion. But what reasonable man, for the precarious enjoyment of rank and power, would establish a system which would reduce his nearest friends and his posterity to slavery and ruin?

If the gentlemen reckon me among the obnoxious few, if they imagine that I contemplate with ambitious eye the immediate honors of the government, yet let them consider that I have my friends, my family, my children, to whom ties of nature and of habit have attached me. If, to-day, I am among the favored few, my children, to-morrow, may be among the oppressed; these dear pledges of my patriotism may, at a future day, be suffering the severe distresses to which my ambition has reduced them. The changes in the human condition are uncertain and frequent: many on whom Fortune has bestowed her favors, may trace their family to a more unprosperous station; and many, who are now in obscurity, may look back upon the affluence and exalted rank of their ancestors.

But I will no longer trespass on your indulgence. I have

troubled the committee with these observations, to show that it cannot be the wish of any reasonable man to establish a government unfriendly to the liberties of the people. Gentlemen ought not, then, to presume that the advocates of this Constitution are influenced by ambitious views. The suspicion, sir, is unjust; the charge is uncharitable.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney: *To the General Convention* (1787)—See Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) I, 362-372.
2. Alexander Hamilton: *To the General Convention* (1787)—See Lodge's *Works of Hamilton* (1903) I, 370-378.
3. James Wilson: *To the Pennsylvania Convention* (1787)—See Elliot's *Debates* (1881) II, 418-434; Williston's *Eloquence of U. S.* (1827) I, 1-21; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 74-81.
4. Oliver Ellsworth: *To the Connecticut Convention* (1788)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 404-409.
5. The Berkshire Farmer: *To the Massachusetts Convention* (1788)—See Fiske's *Critical Period* (1899) 324-326; Elliott's *Debates* II, 118-120.
6. Fisher Ames: *To the Massachusetts Convention* (1788)—See Elliott's *Debates* II, 154-159.
7. Luther Martin: *To the Maryland Convention* (1788)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 373-400.
8. Patrick Henry: *To the Virginia Convention* (1788)—See Elliot's *Debates* III, 43-64; Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 73-101, 178-225, 240-251; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 13-39; Bryan's *World Famous Orations* (1906) VIII, 67-76; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) VII, 18-36.
9. Edmund Randolph: *To the Virginia Convention* (1788)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 102-127; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 165-173; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) IV, 1678-1696.
10. James Madison: *To the Virginia Convention* (1788)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 128-177; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 127-143; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 53-71.
11. John Marshall: *To the Virginia Convention* (1788)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 226-239; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 10-16; Reed's *Pol. Orat.* IV, 1440-1466; Bryan's W. F. O. VIII, 143-154; Brewer, VIII, 86-99.

12. Robert R. Livingston: *To the New York Convention* (1788)—See Elliot's *Debates* II, 212-219; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 355.
13. Alexander Hamilton: *To the New York Convention* (1788)—See Elliot's *Debates* II, 230-239, 251-259, 347-356, 360-371; Lodge's *Works of Hamilton* (1903) II, 3-91; Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 22-72; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 195-204; Johnston and Woodburn I, 39-52; Brewer VI, 324-334.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bancroft's *History of U. S.;* Bancroft's *History of the Constitution;* Bassett's *History of U. S.;* G. T. Curtis's *History of the Constitution;* Fiske's *Civil Government;* Fiske's *Critical Period;* Frothingham's *Rise of the Republic;* Hamilton's *Federalist;* Johnston's *American Politics;* Landon's *Constitutional History;* McMaster's *History of the People of the U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Tucker's *History of the U. S.;* Walker's *Making of the Nation;* Winsor's *America;* Von Holst's *Constitutional History* I.

Biographical Backgrounds

Ames, Fisher—See biographical sketch by Kirkland in Ames's *Works.*
Ellsworth, Oliver—See biography by Brown; also H. C. Lodge's *A Fighting Frigate and Other Essays* (1902) with appendix by G. F. Hoar.
Hamilton, Alexander—See biographies by Hamilton, Shea, Lodge, Sumner, and Vandenberg.
Henry, Patrick—See biographies by Wirt, Tyler, Wm. Wirt Henry, and Morgan.
Jay, John—See biographies by Wm. Jay, Whitlock, and Pellew.
Livingston, Robert R.—See biographies by de Peyster, and Morton.
Madison, James—See biographies by Rives, and Gay.
Marshall, John—See biographies by Magruder, Thayer, and Beveridge.
Randolph, Edmund—See biography by Conway.
Wilson, James—See biographical sketches in Sanderson's *Lives of the Signers;* and Lewis's *Great American Lawyers.*

For Luther Martin, C. C. Pinckney, and Melancton Smith, see Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Hamilton's *Speech to the New York Convention*

I. What internal evidence is there that Hamilton was familiar with: (1) Burke's refutation to Lord North's Plan in Burke's *Speech on Conciliation;* (2) the doctrines of Stoic philosophy?

II. What internal evidence is there: (1) that Hamilton would have disapproved Calhoun's doctrine of nullification; (2) that he would have opposed, or favored, Jackson's course with respect to South Carolina in 1833?

III. What internal evidence is there that Hamilton was familiar with the method of refutation by *reductio ad absurdum?*

IV. Who were: (1) the man who charged Livingston with wandering in flowery fields of fancy; (2) the men who had speculative doubts on the subject of republican government?

V. What were: (1) the argument of Livingston that brought upon him the charge of wandering in flowery fields of fancy; (2) the weaknesses of the Confederation as shown by Livingston in his opening speech; (3) the guarantees placed in the original Constitution to perpetuate the existence of States; (4) the change brought about in the Federal system by the 17th Amendment, which would have weakened one of Hamilton's arguments?

VI. What justification had Hamilton for saying: (1) that the operations of government had been distracted by States taking different courses; (2) that no combination of designing men could make a wise and good and vigorous government unpopular?

Dictionary Studies from Alexander Hamilton

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. ambitious 2. auxiliaries 3. emoluments 4. extraordinary 5. federal 6. ideal 7. inefficacious 8. precarious 9. republican 10. requisition 11. speculative 12. skeptical 13. susceptible 14. trespass 15. vehement.

CHAPTER III

FISHER AMES

Orators and Oratory of the Federalist Party

For approximately two decades after the organization of the Federal government under the Constitution in 1789, the most conspicuous group of orators in America was composed of leading statesmen in the Federalist party.

This party was the party of Hamilton, which found its opposition among the followers of Jefferson, who may be styled the Jeffersonian-Republicans.

The line of cleavage between these two early parties was drawn first on matters solely of internal policy arising from different views as to the proper interpretation of the Federal Constitution, the Federalists believing in a liberal construction of that instrument to facilitate the development of a strong central government, and the Jeffersonian-Republicans believing in a strict construction of the Constitution to maintain as far as possible the sovereign rights of the individual States.

Because the Federalists leaned toward centralization of power, they were charged with being aristocrats; and, because the Jeffersonian-Republicans leaned toward decentralization of power with a minimum of governmental interference in the affairs of States and individuals, they prided themselves upon being democrats.

This line of cleavage between the two parties, at first solely the result of internal policy, soon became more marked and bitter as the result of differences with respect to America's foreign policy toward England and France during the wars that followed the French Revolution.

The Federalists, of course, standing for law and order as against anarchy, sympathized with England in her attempts to restore the French monarchy; and the Jeffersonian-Republicans, as might be expected, because they cherished the principles set forth in the French revolutionary doctrines of liberty, equality, and fraternity, sympathized with the French in their efforts to spread throughout Europe the blessings of republicanism.

While, therefore, matters of internal policy, from time to time, claimed the attention of orators and statesmen, the great overshadowing issues that called forth eloquence during the existence of the Federalist party were generally matters of foreign policy involved in our efforts to cope with either France or England during their life-and-death struggle on the other side of the Atlantic.

First, trouble arose with France, because France insisted upon treating America as an ally bound to her by pledges given in the Revolution. These pledges, however, President Washington regarded as no longer binding, because they were made to the French monarchy and not to the French republic. He, therefore, issued a proclamation of neutrality; but, in spite of this document, he was harassed by a French minister, Genêt, who deliberately organized, on American soil, military and naval expeditions against Great Britain.

When the Genêt trouble was settled, however, by his expulsion from the country, then equally serious trouble seemed to threaten from Great Britain, because that country insisted upon capturing our shipping engaged in the carrying trade from the French West Indies; because it insisted upon impressing American seamen into its navy; and because it encouraged Barbary pirates to prey upon our commerce, which was operating in the interests of France.

After these first causes of trouble were settled amicably, other causes arose threatening war, first with France, and then with England alternately, until America finally declared war in desperation against England as her more persistent persecutor, in 1812.

These questions of foreign policy, mingling with questions of internal policy, produced one of the most peculiar schools of American eloquence that has been known in our history: a school permeated with pessimism at the prospect of the collapse of all government under the influence of French-republican ideals—a school at first sustained by the desperate hope that the tide of Jeffersonian philosophy might be held in check, but at last giving way in defeat to melancholy prophecies of the approaching end of all things, and even lending itself to schemes for disruption of the Union, which it professed to cherish.

Among the distinguished orators of this school of eloquence were: first, Fisher Ames, who, in 1796, advocated the Jay Treaty with England; Robert Goodloe Harper, who, in 1797, advocated aggressive measures against France; Gouverneur Morris, who, in 1802, opposed the repeal of the Judiciary Act by which the Federalists had sought to maintain their power in the courts when they had lost it in Congress; Harrison Gray Otis, who, in 1804, eulogized the dead Hamilton; Luther Martin, who, in 1807, defended Aaron Burr as Jefferson's enemy; James A. Bayard, who, in 1809, demanded the repeal of Jefferson's embargo; and Josiah Quincy, who, in 1808, opposed the embargo; who, in 1811, opposed the admission of Louisiana as a State; and who, in 1813, uttered the last expiring gasp of Federalism, when he opposed the New Army Bill, which Henry Clay advocated as necessary to the prosecution of the war with England.

Such is the list of brilliant orators produced by the Federalist party both in the period of its ascendancy and in the period of its decline. During the latter period the party's foremost spokesman was without doubt Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts; but during the earlier period, as well as for the whole group, the most pre-eminent, as statesman and orator, was Fisher Ames, also of Massachusetts, who, in his speech on the Jay Treaty, achieved one of the most memorable triumphs in the history of the world's oratory.

The Life of Fisher Ames

As Patrick Henry was the foremost orator of the Revolution, and Hamilton, the foremost orator of the epoch in which the Constitution was adopted, so Fisher Ames was the foremost orator of America during the first decade of the new republic, when the Federalist party was in control of the government.

This great parliamentary orator was born at Dedham, Massachusetts, in the year 1758. At sixteen, he graduated from Harvard, just before the outbreak of hostilities in the Revolution, which made necessary a postponement of his preparation for the law. In 1781, however, he had completed his legal studies and was admitted to the bar.

His first public appearance as an orator came in that same year, when he appeared as a delegate in a convention, at Concord, Massachusetts, which had been called to discuss remedies for the terrible distress that people were suffering from their worthless paper currency. In that convention, Ames showed a statesmanlike grasp of the situation by boldly declaring (in substance) that "the cost of a bushel of potatoes or a sack of corn was something which could not be regulated by the will of a few delegates, or by the execution of a rigorous law; that

the ills, of which they complained were such as always come sooner or later to men who could not see the difference between a silver shilling stamped on a die and a paper shilling printed in a press; and that the only cure was a sturdy patriotism and patience hopeful to the last."

From that time forward, says McMaster, the historian, Ames was a public man. He began to be recognized in his profession as a pleader of uncommon eloquence, and soon he added to his political reputation by writing two brilliant series of essays, before and after the Shays Rebellion—the first to give the government decision and energy in combating this exhibition of anarchy; and the second, to explain the lessons inculcated by the dangers of the insurrection.

When the Massachusetts convention for ratifying the Constitution met in 1788, Fisher Ames had become one of the most conspicuous members of the Massachusetts bar, and was therefore chosen as a delegate to represent his district. Along with Theophilus Parsons, Rufus King, and James Bowdoin, all able lawyers, he undertook, in two noteworthy speeches, to defend the proposed new Constitution. His efforts, like those of his colleagues, all seemed to be wasted, however, upon a group of listeners, who made this convention appear more ludicrous than any other convention ever assembled in the history of the Commonwealth; for the anti-federalists had sent up to that body a horde of long-haired folks, country bumpkins, green radicals, and training-day generals—the unripe fruit and windfalls of the Shays Rebellion—that resembled nothing so much as the rabble following of Jack Cade, described by Shakespeare in the most humorous scenes of *Henry the Sixth.* These men listened with the keenest suspicion to whatever the lawyers had to say, and disregarded it all, because they believed that Parsons, King, Bowdoin, and Ames represented the commercial classes, who were attempting to

deprive them of their liberty won in the Revolution, and to crush them under further intolerable taxes levied by a stronger central government. Such men could not be persuaded, therefore, by all the eloquence of those who spoke for the Constitution, but were won over only by a bit of shrewd political strategy, which led John Hancock and Samuel Adams to espouse the Federal cause.

The greatest importance that can be attached to the eloquence of Ames on this occasion is that it displayed the trend of his political philosophy throughout the whole course of his public life. He thought that the Constitution was the last desperate means for preserving the nation from anarchy; and yet he more than half suspected that it contained too great an element of democracy. He put forth one of his best efforts, therefore, in defending before the convention the biennial, rather than an annual, system of elections for the national House of Representatives, and in this speech made the interesting statement that "a democracy is a volcano, which conceals the fiery materials of its own destruction."

The reward for his services in the Massachusetts convention was an immediate election to the State legislature, and a year later to the House of Representatives in Congress; where, as chief spokesman for the Federalists during the two administrations of Washington, he was called upon constantly to meet in debate such able opponents as James Madison and Albert Gallatin.

Though continually at the front in the debates of Congress, he will be remembered, nevertheless, for only two of his principal utterances—the first, a speech delivered in 1794 against *Madison's Resolutions,* which were intended to bring about a discrimination against the trade of Great Britain; and the other, a speech delivered in 1796 in favor of appropriations to carry out the provisions of the Jay Treaty with England.

For his speech against *Madison's Resolutions,* Ames won the reward of being burned in effigy by a mob of French sympathizers in Charleston, South Carolina; but, for his speech on the Jay Treaty, he won universal recognition as the greatest orator of his time in Congress.

When Ames delivered this great speech, he was suffering from a malady that caused him soon to retire from public office. He then re-entered the practice of his profession; but his exertions in court proved too much for his strength; and he, therefore, retired permanently to his farm in Dedham; where he subsequently wielded a powerful influence on party politics by his voluminous correspondence, and by his numerous essays, denouncing the policies of Jefferson after the Federalist party had fallen from power.

Among the honors that came to Fisher Ames in his last years, was an appointment to deliver the *Eulogy of Washington* in 1799 before the General Court of Massachusetts, and an offer of the presidency of Harvard College in 1804; but Ames's great work for the nation had been accomplished, long before, in his one most brilliant speech on the Jay Treaty. From the year of that speech, until his death in 1808, Ames lived a life of pessimism for the future of his country, joining in the intrigues of the ill-starred Essex Junto, and hoping against hope that some miraculous turn in politics would rescue the nation from the fatal poison of Jeffersonian democracy.

Historical Setting for Ames's Speech on the Jay Treaty

The speech of Fisher Ames on the Jay Treaty is one of the great epoch-making utterances in the history of American oratory. Never since the time of Patrick Henry's speech,

The Call to Arms, had it been equaled for eloquence, and never again was its equal to be heard in Congress until thirty-four years afterward, Webster delivered his famous *Reply to Hayne.*

Since the organization of the government in 1789, no question had quite so violently stirred all the bitter feelings of partisan hatred in America as had the ratification of the Jay Treaty with England; for this treaty, which seemed to surrender to England almost every principle and privilege for which America had contended, awoke once more all the bitter enmity toward Great Britain of the Revolutionary days, and arrayed the pro-British and the pro-French parties in America against each other in such a way as to threaten civil war and a disruption of the new government under the Constitution.

The publication of the treaty in 1795, after it had received barely a two-thirds vote of the Senate for its ratification, was followed by an explosion of popular wrath throughout America, such as had not been known since the promulgation of the *Stamp Act* by England in 1765. Jay was accused of having sold himself for British gold, and of having prostrated at the feet of majesty the sovereignty of the people. From Maine to Georgia, he was burned in effigy, and his treaty was consigned to the flames.

In Boston, Faneuil Hall was shaken to its foundations by fifteen thousand citizens, who assembled to protest against it; and a British vessel was burned at the wharves. In New York, Hamilton attempted to defend the treaty before a mass meeting in front of the Federal Building, but he was met with a volley of stones hurled at him by French sympathizers, and was compelled to retire with blood streaming down his face. In Philadelphia, riotous processions moved through the

streets, and held their indignation meetings under the very walls of Congress. In Virginia, every town and county voiced its protest; and John Randolph, a rising orator, proposed the toast—"George Washington, may he be damned, if he signs the Jay Treaty." Nowhere was the opposition more violent than in Charleston, South Carolina, where the British flag was dragged through the streets and burned in front of the British consul's door. The old Revolutionary orator, John Rutledge, who had just been appointed to succeed Jay, as chief-justice of the United States, was brought out to an excited mass meeting, assembled in St. Michael's Church; and, venting the rage he had never ceased to feel against Great Britain since the Revolutionary struggle, he called Jay "either a fool, or a knave," and denounced the treaty in such violent language that the Senate later refused to confirm his appointment as chief-justice.

When Congress assembled, it was thought that Washington would not dare to promulgate the treaty, or lay it before the House of Representatives for the money appropriation necessary to carry it into effect. Washington, however, thought the treaty, no matter how defective, was preferable to war at this time; and, therefore, he declared it to be law, and sent it to the House on March 2, 1796.

Thereupon, a terrific parliamentary battle began, which lasted nearly sixty days. During the debates on this subject, says McMaster, the historian, "not a member able to address the House without stammering and blushing failed to do so." John Marshall, also, has said of these debates that "at no time, perhaps, had the members of the national legislature been stimulated to great exertions by stronger feelings than impelled them on this occasion. Never had a greater display been made of argument, of eloquence, and of passion."

In these debates, the great issues were, of course: First, whether the House of Representatives had any constitutional right to refuse its assent to appropriations necessary to carry out a treaty that had been ratified by the Senate and promulgated by the President; then, whether the country would be guilty of a breach of faith, if the House refused to carry out the treaty that had thus become the law of the land; and, finally, whether it was better to reject an obviously bad bargain and stand the chance of immediate hostilities, not only with England, but also with her barbarous Indian allies on the frontier. These were the great issues; but the passions that fanned every discussion of them into flames were the horrible dread of French Jacobinism on the one side and the abiding hatred of everything British on the other.

The chief opponents of the treaty among the Republicans of the House were Madison, Giles, and Gallatin; while Fisher Ames was the chief support of the Federalists and the administration. During the greater part of the debates, Ames was under orders from his physician not to endanger his health by speaking in public; but, in spite of this fact, he followed closely the deliberations on the treaty throughout all their dreary length. Each week he became more and more pessimistic about the final result; and, in his letters to friends, he spoke frequently of the "mortal disease" with which he thought the government was then afflicted. "Here, we dance upon the edge of the pit," he said, "crying *Ça ira,*" words taken from a popular song of the French Revolution. Then he added mournfully: "It is but a little way to the bottom."

On April 26, Gallatin made his last great effort to delay the execution of the treaty; and, on the 27th, Uriah Tracy answered him. Tracy's answer, however, was ill-humored, containing flings at Gallatin's foreign birth and foreign accent, as

well as at the part he had played in the recent Whiskey Insurrection. Rather than helping the Federalist cause, therefore, Tracy's remarks only turned the tide more decidedly against it.

When, on the following day, Ames rose, pale and trembling from recent illness, to address the House in favor of the treaty, he embodied the last desperate hope of the administration party. So pathetic, indeed, was his appearance that it has been likened to that of Chatham in his last speech, when he was brought into the House of Lords on a stretcher, and then carried home to die.

As Ames proceeded, he gathered strength, however, and warmed with his subject. He pictured our disgrace, if we were to violate our plighted faith; he described the scenes of confusion and anarchy that must follow a rejection of the treaty; and then he dwelt upon the imminent horrors of Indian massacre still so fresh in the minds of his auditors from the terrible memories associated with St. Clair's defeat in 1791. "Beckoning to his hearers," says Schouler, the historian, "like the spectre of some disembodied hero who awaits the cock-crow before returning to the shades of an invisible world, Ames held his long familiar associates spell-bound by the vivid imagery of those dreadful scenes and a pathos of expression worthy of Jonathan Edwards."

Throughout this speech, John Adams, the Vice-President, sat with Justice Iredell as a spectator in the gallery of the House. He said of Ames, that "he was attended to with a silence and interest never before known, and he made an impression that terrified the hardiest, and will never be forgotten. Judge Iredell and I happened to sit together. Our feelings beat in unison. 'My God! How great he is,' says Iredell, 'how great he has been!' 'He has been noble,' said I; and

thus we went on with our interjections, not to say tears till the end. Tears enough were shed. Not a dry eye, I believe in the house, except some of the jackasses who had occasioned the necessity of the oratory. These attempted to laugh, but their visages grinned horribly ghastly smiles."

"This speech," says Dr. Priestley, an extreme Republican of Philadelphia, who was familiar with the eloquence of Pitt the father and Pitt the son, and Edmund Burke, and Charles James Fox, "was the most bewitching piece of parliamentary oratory I ever listened to." And Dr. Caldwell, another citizen of Philadelphia, who likewise witnessed the great debate in which this speech came as a fitting climax, says of it that it was "the most brilliant and fascinating specimen of eloquence that he had ever heard,"—though he had listened to some of the most celebrated speakers in the British Parliament, including Wilberforce, Mackintosh, Plunket, Brougham, and Canning.

When Ames sank back into his seat, the feelings of the House had become so agitated that a member of the opposition moved to adjourn, in order that a vote might not be taken under the influence of the spell that Ames had thrown over them. The speech, however, had carried the day. As Ames began, the opposition had claimed a majority of three against the treaty; but, on the day following his speech, this vote, in committee of the whole, stood 49 to 49, and the chairman, who had been won over, cast his deciding vote in favor of the treaty. The matter was then reported to the House; and the final vote, recorded by yeas and nays, showed that the old majority had been reversed, with 48 against the treaty and 51 in its favor.

By this one great speech, Fisher Ames had done more than all the other Federalist speakers in Congress combined. He

had brought to an end the long and embittered debates on the Jay Treaty, and secured against a hostile and well-disciplined majority, the necessary appropriation for carrying the treaty into effect. He had saved the nation's plighted faith; put to rest a constitutional question that threatened to shake the new government to its very foundations; and warded off a war with England when only the most disastrous consequences could have followed in its wake. So much, Ames had done for the nation; and, in doing so, he had won for himself a secure and permanent reputation, not only as a splendid rhetorician, but also as the most brilliant parliamentary orator of his time in America.

Fisher Ames: on the Jay Treaty

April 28, 1796

This, sir, is a cause that would be dishonored and betrayed, if I contented myself with appealing only to the understanding. On a question of shame and honor, reasoning is sometimes useless, and worse. I feel the decision in my pulse—if it throws no light on the brain, it kindles a fire at the heart.

It is not easy to deny, it is impossible to doubt, that a treaty imposes an obligation on the American nation. It would be childish to consider the President and Senate obliged, and the House free.

On every hypothesis, the conclusion is not to be resisted; we are either to execute this treaty, or break our faith.

To expatiate on the value of the public faith may pass with some men for declamation—to such men I have nothing to say. To others I will urge—can any circumstance mark upon a people more turpitude and debasement? Can anything tend more to make men think themselves mean, or degrade to a

lower point their estimation of virtue and their standard of action?

It would not merely demoralize mankind; it tends to break all the ligaments of society, to dissolve that mysterious charm which attracts individuals to the nation, and to inspire in its stead a repulsive sense of shame and disgust.

I see no exception to the respect that is paid among nations to the law of good faith. If there are cases in this enlightened period when it is violated, there are none where it is decried. It is the philosophy of politics, the religion of governments. It is observed by barbarians—a whiff of tobacco smoke, or a string of beads, gives not merely binding force, but sanctity to treaties. Even in Algiers a truce may be bought for money; but when ratified, even Algiers is too wise, or too just, to disown and annul its obligation. Thus we see neither the ignorance of savages, nor the principles of an association for piracy and rapine, permit a nation to despise its engagements.

If, sir, there could be a resurrection from the foot of the gallows, if the victims of justice could live again, collect together and form a society, they would, however loath, soon find themselves obliged to make justice, that justice under which they fell, the fundamental law of their state. They would perceive, it was their interest to make others respect, and they would therefore pay some respect themselves to the obligations of good faith.

It is painful, I hope it is superfluous, to make even the supposition that America should furnish the occasion of this opprobrium. No, let me rather make the supposition that Great Britain refuses to execute the treaty, after we have done everything to carry it into effect. Is there any language of reproach pungent enough to express our commentary on

the fact? What would you say, or rather what would you not say? Would you not tell them, wherever an Englishman might travel, shame would stick to him—he would disown his country. You would exclaim, England, proud of your wealth, and arrogant in the possession of power—blush for these distinctions, which become the vehicles of your dishonor. Such a nation might truly say to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister. We should say of such a race of men, their name is heavier than their debt.

I can scarcely persuade myself to believe that the consideration I have suggested requires the aid of any auxiliary. But, unfortunately, auxiliary arguments are at hand. Those who talk so much of the interest of the United States should calculate how deeply it will be affected by rejecting the treaty. Can they take upon them to say that an Indian peace, under these circumstances, will prove firm? No, sir, it will not be peace, but a sword: it will be no better than a lure to draw victims within the reach of the tomahawk.

On this theme my emotions are unutterable. If I could find words for them, if my powers bore any proportion to my zeal, I would swell my voice to such a note of remonstrance, it would reach every log-house beyond the mountains. I would say to the inhabitants, wake from your false security: your cruel dangers, your more cruel apprehensions are soon to be renewed: the wounds, yet unhealed, are to be torn open again: in the day time, your path through the woods will be ambushed: the darkness of midnight will glitter with the blaze of your dwellings. You are a father—the blood of your sons shall fatten your cornfield: you are a mother—the war-whoop shall wake the sleep of the cradle.

On this subject, you need not suspect any deception on your

feelings. It is a spectacle of horror, which cannot be overdrawn. If you have nature in your hearts, it will speak a language, compared with which, all I have said, or can say will be poor and frigid.

Who will say that I exaggerate the tendencies of our measures? Will any one answer by a sneer that all this is idle preaching? Will any one deny that we are bound, and, I would hope, to good purpose, by the most solemn sanctions of duty, for the vote we give? Are despots alone to be reproached for unfeeling indifference to the tears and blood of their subjects? Are republicans responsible? Can you put the dearest interest of society at risk without guilt and without remorse? It is vain to offer, as an excuse, that public men are not to be reproached for the evils that may happen to ensue from their measures. This is very true, where they are unforeseen or inevitable. Those I have depicted are not unforeseen; they are so far from inevitable, we are going to bring them into being by our vote. We choose the consequences, and become as justly answerable for them as for the measure that we know will produce them.

By rejecting the posts, we light the savage fires; we bind the victims. This day we undertake to render account to the widows and orphans whom our decision will make, to the wretches that will be roasted at the stake, to our country, and I do not deem it too serious to say, to conscience and to God. We are answerable, and if duty be anything more than a word of imposture, if conscience be not a bugbear, we are preparing to make ourselves as wretched as our country.

There is no mistake in this case; there can be none. Experience has already been the prophet of events, and the cries of our future victims have already reached us. The western inhabitants are not a silent and uncomplaining sacrifice. The

voice of humanity issues from the shade of their wilderness. It exclaims that while one hand is held up to reject this treaty, the other grasps a tomahawk. It summons our imagination to the scenes that will open. It is no great effort of the imagination to conceive that events so near are already begun. I can fancy that I listen to the yells of savage vengeance, and the shrieks of torture. Already they seem to sigh in the west wind—already they mingle with every echo from the mountains.

Are the posts to remain forever in the possession of Great Britain? Let those who reject them, when the treaty offers them to our hands, say, if they choose, they are of no importance. If they are, will they take them by force? The argument I am urging, would then come to a point. To use force is war. To talk of treaty again is too absurd.

And is there anything in the prospect of the interior state of the country to encourage us to aggravate the dangers of war? Would not the shock of that evil produce another, and shake down the feeble and then unbraced structure of our government? Is this a chimera? Is it going off the ground of matter of fact to say, the rejection of the appropriation proceeds from the doctrine of a civil war of the departments? Two branches have ratified the treaty, and we are going to set it aside. How is this disorder in the machine to be rectified? While it exists, its movements must stop, and when we talk of a remedy, is that any other than the formidable one of a revolutionary interposition of the people? And is this, in the judgment even of my opposers, to execute, to preserve the Constitution and the public order? Is this the state of hazard, if not of convulsion, which they can have the courage to contemplate and to brave, or beyond which their penetration can reach and see the issue? Some of them have, no doubt, better

nerves and better discernment than mine. They can see the bright aspects and happy consequences of all this array of horrors. They can see intestine discords; our government disorganized; our wrongs aggravated, multiplied and unredressed; peace with dishonor; or war without justice, union, or resources; they can see all these things in "the calm lights of mild philosophy."

Let me cheer the mind, weary no doubt and ready to despond on this prospect, by presenting another prospect, which is yet in our power to realize. Is it possible for a real American to look at the prosperity of this country without some desire for its continuance, without some respect for the measures which, many will say, produced, and all will confess, have preserved it? Will he not feel some dread that a change of system would reverse the scene? The great interest and the general desire of our people was to enjoy the advantages of neutrality. This instrument, however misrepresented, affords America that inestimable security. The causes of our disputes are either cut up by the roots, or referred to a new negotiation after the end of the European war. This was gaining everything, because it confirmed our neutrality, by which our citizens are gaining everything. This alone would justify the engagements of the government.

Let us not hesitate then to agree to the appropriation to carry this treaty into faithful execution. Thus we shall save the faith of our nation, secure its peace, and diffuse the spirit of confidence and enterprise that will augment its prosperity.

I rose to speak under impressions, that I would have resisted if I could. Those who see me will believe that the reduced state of my health has unfitted me, almost equally, for much exertion of body or mind. Unprepared for debate by careful reflection in my retirement or by long attention here, I thought

the resolution I had taken to sit silent was imposed by necessity and would cost me no effort to maintain. With a mind thus vacant of ideas, and sinking as I really am, under a sense of weakness, I imagined that the very desire of speaking was extinguished by the persuasion that I had nothing to say. Yet when I come to the moment of deciding the vote, I start back with dread from the edge of the pit into which we are plunging. In my view, even the minutes I have spent in expostulation have their value, because they protract the crisis and the short period in which alone we may resolve to escape it.

I have thus been led by my feelings to speak more at length than I had intended. Yet I have, perhaps, as little personal interest in the event as any one here. There is, I believe, no member who will not think his chance to be a witness of the consequences greater than mine. If, however, the vote should pass to reject, and a spirit should arise, as it will, with the public disorders, to make confusion worse confounded, even I, slender and almost broken as my hold upon life is, may outlive the government and Constitution of my country.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE PERIOD OF FISHER AMES—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Patrick Henry: *The British Debts Case* (1791)—See Snyder's *Great Speeches by Great Lawyers* (1881) 1-33.
2. Fisher Ames: *On the Madison Resolutions* (1794)—See Williston's *Eloquence of the U. S.* (1827) I, 298-331; Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) I, 92-103.
3. James Madison: *On the Jay Treaty* (April 15, 1796)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 332-351; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 144-150; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) IV, 1404-1421.
4. Albert Gallatin: *On the Jay Treaty* (April 26, 1796)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 396-424; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 133-143.
5. Fisher Ames: *On the Jay Treaty* (April 28, 1796)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 425-463; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 104-117; Johnston and Wood-

burn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 112-130; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) VIII, 155-165; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) I, 145-153.

6. Robert Goodloe Harper: *On Aggressions of France* (1797)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* I, 471-507; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 491-503.
7. Fisher Ames: *Eulogy of Washington* (1800)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* V, 139-148.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *History of U. S.;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Hart's *Formation of the Union;* Higginson's *Larger History of U. S.;* Hildreth's *United States;* Johnston's *American Politics;* McMaster's *History of the People of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Von Holst's *Constitutional History of U. S.;* Walker's *Making of the Nation.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Adams, John—See biographies by Adams, and Morse.
Ames, Fisher—See biographical sketch by Kirkland in Ames's *Works.*
Gallatin, Albert—See biographies by Henry Adams, and J. A. Stevens.
Henry, Patrick—See biographies by Wirt, Tyler, Wm. Wirt Henry, and Morgan.
Jay, John—See biographies by Wm. Jay, Whitlock, and Pellew.
Jefferson, Thomas—See biographies by Tucker, Parton, and Morse.
Madison, James—See biographies by Rives, and Gay.
Washington, George—See biographies by Washington Irving, Fiske, Lodge, Johnston, Hapgood, and Harrison.

For Ames, Harper, and others, see Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Ames's *Speech on the Jay Treaty*

I. What internal evidence is there that Ames was familiar with Addison's *Cato,* Act I, Scene I?
II. What internal evidence is there that Ames was familiar with: (1) historical events in the lives of General Josiah Harmar, and General Arthur St. Clair; (2) the battle of Miami in 1791?
III. What were: (1) America's experience with Algiers; (2) the interior state of the country; (3) the defects in the Constitution exposed by our experience with the *Jay Treaty;* (4) the pit into which we were plunging.

IV. Where were: (1) the posts retained by Great Britain in 1796; (2) the frontier line in 1796?

V. What implied reference does Ames make to: (1) the *Treaty of Greenville* in 1795; (2) the Whisky Insurrection in 1794?

VI. What justification had Ames for saying: (1) that, on questions of shame and honor, reasoning is sometimes useless; (2) that he might outlive the government and Constitution of his country?

Dictionary Studies from Fisher Ames

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. absurd 2. augment 3. calculate 4. chimera 5. confound 6. expatiate 7. expostulation 8. hypothesis 9. ligament 10. loath 11. opprobrium 12. pungent 13. superfluous 14. turpitude 15. vehicle.

CHAPTER IV

JOHN RANDOLPH

Orators and Oratory of the Jeffersonian Era

The Jeffersonian era in American political history extends from about 1800, when Jefferson was elected President, through the first administration of James Madison to the declaration of war against Great Britain in 1812.

This period in history was one in which fate seemed to be moulding the destinies of America, often without much regard for the professed political philosophy of its ruling statesmen, and almost uniformly in direct opposition to the clamorous demands of its most conspicuous political orators.

As a distinct period in American oratory, this age is remarkable for the fact that its guiding statesman was no orator at all, and that those members of his party who had in times past brilliantly demonstrated their talents as orators, such as, for example, James Madison and Albert Gallatin, were silent because they were occupying executive positions in the government rather than being present in the forum of political debate.

The eloquence of this era, therefore, was the product chiefly of orators belonging to the opposition party, or to disgruntled factions among Jefferson's original following. Hence, the eloquence of this period had a bitter partisan flavor, was almost devoid of any high, constructive statesmanship, was here and there interspersed with extravagant partisan eulogy, but for the most part consisted of rancorous protest, stinging denunciation, ringing invective, and gloomy prophecy of impending ruin.

To understand fully the oratory of this era, it is necessary to understand the political philosophy of the two parties contending for power. The Federalist party, which was the party in opposition, was composed largely of representatives of the commercial interests of the country. Its chief stronghold was in New England, and it looked out upon the ocean for its prosperity to the carrying trade between the West Indies and the countries of Europe. Because trade requires protection for property and a more or less uniform and stable condition, this party believed quite naturally in a strong central government and a powerful navy.

The Jeffersonian-Republican party, however, which had come into possession of the government, was, by contrast, composed largely of representatives of the agricultural interests. Its chief stronghold was in the South and West, and it looked for its prosperity into the interior, toward the frontier communities, and especially toward the Mississippi river, as providing a means for transporting its commodities to market. For various reasons it was opposed to a strong central government; and, because it had little interest in the foreign carrying trade, it was most decidedly opposed to maintaining a costly navy.

In matters of political philosophy and in matters of internal policy, these two parties differed radically; but, in matters pertaining to foreign relations, they were even more widely separated; for, during the period of the Napoleonic wars, the Federalists were violently pro-British and anti-French, and the Jeffersonian-Republicans were quite as violently pro-French and anti-British.

In view, therefore, of these extreme differences between these two parties, it is not at all surprising that, at the beginning of this era, in 1800, when Jefferson was chosen President,

the Federalists thought that the country was doomed, and the Jeffersonian-Republicans thought that utopia was about to be realized.

Almost immediately after this overturn in the government, the Jeffersonian-Republicans, taking full advantage of their sweeping victory, began to undo the mischief which they thought had been done by the preceding Federalist administrations; and, in particular, they addressed themselves to the task of repealing the judiciary legislation by which the Federalists had hoped to continue their power through last-minute appointments to the Federal bench.

This repeal, the Jeffersonian-Republicans accomplished in 1802; and then, to weaken further the grip of the Federalists on the courts, they attemped unsuccessfully in 1805 to remove by impeachment the most obnoxious of Federalist judges, Justice Chase of the Supreme Court.

Divisions soon came, however, in their own ranks; and, in 1807, they found it necessary to bring the whole weight of the administration to bear in the unsuccessful prosecution for treason of the renegade Jeffersonian-Republican, Aaron Burr, who had been Vice President during Jefferson's first administration, and who was then charged with attempting to organize on American soil a buccaneering expedition against the South West.

If, during the Jeffersonian era, America's foreign relations had not been kept in constant turmoil by the arbitrary acts of both Great Britain and France in the Napoleonic wars, it is possible that the quiet revolution brought about by Jefferson in 1800 might have established more permanently his theories of government; but, as it was, fate intervened to make Napoleon the unwitting arbiter of America's destinies—to convert Jefferson and his followers to the exercise of strong, even un-

constitutional, Federal authority; to convert them, after sad experience in giving up the exercise of our rights upon the seas, into ardent defenders of our foreign commerce; and at last to bring into Congress a new type of Jeffersonian-Republicans, called War Democrats, who favored war to the teeth on land and sea for the expansion of our territories and the preservation of our rights.

The Jeffersonian era in American oratory might well be called, therefore, the Napoleonic era; for in America, as in Europe, Napoleon was the great over-shadowing influence of the times. By 1799, Napoleon had made himself practical dictator over France with the title of First Consul; and, later on, in 1804, he had himself proclaimed emperor.

Much that he did in his European wars had no direct effect in America, but other parts of his diplomacy and military strategy produced immediate and permanent effects in American history.

In the year 1800, for example, Napoleon forced Spain, as his ally, to cede to France by the secret treaty of San Ildefonso the Louisiana Territory. The Spanish authorities at New Orleans were not immediately removed, however; and all knowledge of the treaty was concealed for more than two years. Then, in 1802, the Spanish authorities suddenly withdrew from Americans their treaty right to deposit goods at New Orleans, and thus they effectually blocked the mouth of the river to our commerce. This brought an outburst of indignation from all inhabitants of the Mississippi valley, and led Congress in 1803 to discuss measures for war against Spain to open up the river.

All such war talk soon ceased, however, with the astounding purchase by Jefferson of the entire Louisiana Territory from France in 1803. At this time, Napoleon had decided upon a

renewal of hostilities against Great Britain after an interval of a year's peace following the treaty of Amiens in 1802; and, because he felt that Louisiana would be a military liability, he very readily consented to sell it to the United States. The renewed Napoleonic wars, that soon spread throughout Europe, led England to revive her Rule of 1756, which prohibited American vessels as neutrals from engaging in the carrying trade for France from the French West Indies. Against this rule, the United States retorted in 1806 by a non-intercourse act to prohibit all American trade with Great Britain. Then came the Berlin Decree of Napoleon, in 1806, blockading the British Isles against all neutral trade; and, in retaliation, England issued an Order in Council, in 1807, blockading France and all the ports of her allies; whereupon, Napoleon further retorted by the Milan Decree, which made lawful prize any vessel that submitted to the British Orders in Council.

These various decrees and orders in council, issued by the European belligerents, if obeyed, would have swept American commerce from the seas; but it was left to Jefferson's own government to finish this work by efforts at retaliation. In 1807, Congress passed an embargo act to seal up our ports against all commerce; and, in 1809, it passed even more drastic legislation to enforce the cessation of all our maritime activity.

This embargo proved intolerable; and, in 1810, it was changed for a non-intercourse act against Great Britain; because some relief must be had, and Napoleon, to gain favor, had falsely promised a relaxation of his Berlin and Milan Decrees.

In the meantime, however, many naval encounters had occurred on the high seas with individual British ships that

insisted upon the right of search to impress, from American ships, alleged British subjects into the British navy.

The result was that America, exasperated beyond endurance, declared war on Great Britain in 1812, under the timid leadership of Madison, who was forced to take decisive action by the demands of the War Democrats.

Such is the political history of the Jeffersonian era, from which the orators of the time derived themes for their eloquence. To mention every noteworthy speech of the period would be impossible; but some of the more memorable are the following: in 1802, the speech of Gouverneur Morris, a Federalist, in protest against the repeal of the Judiciary Act; in 1803, the speech of DeWitt Clinton, a Jeffersonian-Republican, in protest against the war preparations to force Spain to open up the Mississippi river to American navigation; in 1805, the speeches of John Randolph, a Jeffersonian-Republican, in the impeachment proceedings against Judge Chase; in 1806, the speech by Randolph against the *Gregg Resolution* on non-intercourse with England; in 1807, the speech of William Wirt, a Jeffersonian-Republican, for the prosecution in the trial of Aaron Burr; in 1808 and in 1809 the speeches of Josiah Quincy and James A. Bayard, both Federalists, against the embargo; and in 1811, the speech by Quincy against the admission of Louisiana as a State, and the speech by Randolph against the Militia Bill as a preparation for war with England.

Among all these orators, without doubt, the most able were Josiah Quincy for the Federalists and John Randolph for the Jeffersonian-Republicans. Both will long be remembered for their brilliant and historic utterances; but, of the two, John Randolph must be acknowledged as the more conspicuous

through a longer period of time, and in consequence he is known as the foremost political orator of America in the Jeffersonian era.

The Life of John Randolph

John Randolph of Roanoke was one of the most eccentric characters that has ever appeared in the rôle of statesman at the national capital. Yet, in spite of his eccentricities, he is reckoned as the most eloquent orator that America produced in the first decade of the nineteenth century—a man, who, in the first years of the Jeffersonian era, ruled like an autocrat over the lower House of Congress, who later threw off all party ties, and who became the self-appointed and intrepid spokesman of every lost cause advanced in Congress during eight successive administrations of the government, until, at last, death brought to an end his long and eventful career of chronic opposition.

This strange statesman and eccentric orator, who proudly claimed descent from the Indian, Pocahontas, was born into one of the most distinguished and powerful of Virginia families, at Cawson's, Chesterfield County, in 1773. His childhood was vividly colored by the events of the Revolution, when, with his mother, he was obliged to flee before the marauding forces of the traitor, Benedict Arnold, then in the employ of the British. After a wild youth, spent chiefly in hunting, fishing, horse-racing, and cock-fighting, he became a student for a short period at Princeton and Columbia; and, while in attendance at the latter institution, he witnessed the inauguration of Washington as the first President of the United States. During the ceremonies on this occasion, Randolph's brother, Richard, was jostled back into the crowd by the

coachman of the Vice President, John Adams, whom Randolph, the haughty Virginian, regarded as nothing but a Yankee school-master assuming the airs of royalty; and, from that time forward, a fierce hatred of everything that New England Federalism stood for seemed to become a guiding principle in Randolph's public life.

For a while, Randolph pretended to study in the office of his relative, Edmund Randolph, then Attorney-General; but his interest soon lagged, and almost nothing is heard of Randolph, until, in 1799, during the agitation in Virginia over the *Alien* and *Sedition Acts* and the *Kentucky* and *Virginia Resolutions,* he consciously decided, at the age of twenty-six, to emulate the example of his great contemporary, William Pitt, who, at the age of twenty-five, had become prime minister of England. Accordingly, he offered himself as a candidate for Congress, and had the audacity to meet on the stump no less an opponent than the venerable Patrick Henry himself, who was then running for a seat in the Virginia legislature.

Though Patrick Henry called Randolph on that occasion "a little dog," and gave him some pretty sound advice; that same "little dog" secured his seat in Congress, nevertheless; and he immediately gained notoriety by a scurrilous speech in which he attacked the standing army of the United States as "a handful of ragamuffins." For this insolent speech, he was roughly handled by army officers; and then he was reprimanded by the House for an impudent letter of protest on the subject written to the President. This temporary set-back was quickly overcome, however; and, in the next Congress, this mere novice and stripling became the leader of the administration forces in the House. As chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, he held a whip-hand over all the proceedings of the House for a period of five years; until, in

1806, during a fit of jealousy, he broke with his party, and thereafter was committed to a policy of hopeless opposition.

While Randolph remained in power, however, he acquired great prominence through a series of violent speeches directed against the attempt of Madison and Jefferson to smooth over the far-reaching Yazoo land-fraud cases that involved most of the land now included within the States of Alabama and Mississippi; and through his melodramatic and vapid oratory during the impeachment proceedings against Judge Chase of the Supreme Court before the bar of the Senate.

Randolph's fame as an orator is based, however, not on these speeches delivered while he was in power, but upon two noteworthy speeches delivered later during the long period of his chronic opposition: the first, in 1806, against the *Gregg Resolution,* which pointed toward war with England; and the second, in 1811, against the *Militia Bill,* which was the beginning of the preparation for the War of 1812.

From the year 1806, when Randolph became an insurgent, he was regarded in Congress by friend and foe alike as a "nuisance and a curse"; but, from 1815 onward, he was regarded, also, by many, as a half-responsible madman, crazed at times by drink, always suffering from some mysterious ailment or deep sorrow, and subject as from his earliest days to violent spasms of ungovernable temper; yet a man, nevertheless, who, in his paroxysms of rage, could rise to the greatest heights of denunciatory eloquence, and who, in his more lucid moments, could penetrate the future with the vision of a seer and lay down doctrines that have given him a place among the leading statesmen of America.

Randolph's most brilliant stroke as a political leader was conceived by him in 1820, during the violent debates on the Missouri Compromise, which he opposed with his utmost vigor

in many long speeches before the House. At this time, he saw the central government at Washington like a great octopus reaching out to control the spread of slavery in the States, and, thus assuming powers that, if left unchecked, would ultimately, not only bring about the downfall of slavery, but would also extinguish forever the old Republican doctrine of State rights.

To check this dreaded movement, Randolph sought to create a fusion between the doctrine of State rights and the pro-slavery doctrines of the South, making himself, thereby, the successor of Patrick Henry in the realm of statesmanship and the predecessor of Calhoun, who carried out to all its logical conclusions this new theory of political alignments.

While working on this new theory of making State rights the special property of the slave-holding States, Randolph delivered before the House of Representatives in 1824 two of the most remarkable speeches in American history on *Internal Improvements* and on the *Tariff*, foretelling, at that time, with the accuracy of inspired prophecy, events that were to come forty years afterwards, including not only the great war between the States, but also Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and the precise means by which this was brought about.

Throughout Randolph's struggles to create a solid South, he very rightly considered Henry Clay as his greatest opponent; and, accordingly, he seized every opportunity to denounce this distinguished centralizing statesman and orator from Kentucky, with the hope that he might drive him from power and crush him under the weight of Southern pro-slave prejudice. Following up such tactics, he delivered in the Senate, in 1826, his famous *Blifil and Black George Speech*, directed equally against the President, John Quincy Adams, and against Clay, his Secretary-of-State. In this speech, he spoke of Clay as a

"being, so brilliant yet so corrupt, which, like a rotten mackerel by moonlight, shined and stunk." As a result of this speech, Randolph was summoned forth to a bloodless duel, and lost all glimmering hopes of future advancement.

Henceforth, Randolph was what he himself might call "a decayed politician." He failed of re-election to the Senate; was sent back by his constituents to the House; intrigued against Clay for President in 1830 and favored Andrew Jackson; was rewarded with an appointment as minister to Russia; and returned to America in time to throw off his allegiance to Jackson and give support to Calhoun in the revolt of South Carolina against the *Force Bill* of the Federal government.

While exerting every energy to promote the rebellion of South Carolina, he found himself circumvented again by the superior statesmanship of Clay; and worn out by the ravages of consumption, aggravated by continual displays of temper and rash excesses in drinking, he died on May 24, 1833, in Philadelphia, at the beginning of a proposed last trip to England in search of better health.

Historical Setting of Randolph's Speech on the Gregg Resolution

. The speech by John Randolph on the *Gregg Resolution* in 1806, in which he violently opposed any measure that might lead to war with England, marks one of the great turning points in his career as a statesman and the beginning of a disastrous period of passive resistance to British aggression on the high seas, which finally culminated in the War of 1812.

The occasion for the introduction of the *Gregg Resolution* was the fact that England, in her war against Napoleon, had decreed that American ships could no longer serve in the carrying trade between France and her colonies in the West

Indies, on the ground that what was forbidden by France in time of peace was illegal in time of war. This blow at American commerce raised a cry of indignation among those who had been getting rich in this trade; and the feeling of hot resentment thus produced against Great Britain was fanned into flame by continual reports of the seizure of American vessels and the impressment of American seamen into the British navy.

To retaliate for such injuries, President Jefferson expected John Randolph to take the lead in Congress in introducing resolutions that would break off all commercial intercourse with Great Britain; but Randolph had come to feel out of sympathy with the administration, believing that it had made him a cat's paw in the recent humiliating impeachment of Judge Chase. He also thought that the administration had been playing politics in the Yazoo land-fraud cases; that they had tried to bribe Napoleon to force Spain to sell West Florida; and that they were refusing to him his rightful place in the inner councils of the party. He, therefore, put the President's proposal in his pocket and left the capital for several weeks' absence in Philadelphia.

On his return to Congress, he was furious to learn that the administration had selected another spokesman, and that the resolution which he was expected to introduce had been formulated and presented by a Mr. Gregg. He lost no time, therefore, in attacking with the most bitter sarcasm the proposition of the administration; and, not being content to restrict his remarks to the resolution itself, he entered upon the most scathing denunciation of the President and his Secretary-of-State, James Madison. At times, his speech seemed to be as incoherent as the ravings of a madman; yet, at other times, he dealt blows at his opponents that made them wince and cringe for what he might say next.

No one in the time of Randolph could coin more effective phrases than he; and so it was, when, in opposing this measure as one leading indirectly to war, he compared the American republic to a great land animal, "a mammoth of the forest" that was about "to leave his native element and plunge into the water in a mad contest with the shark." "Let him beware," said Randolph, "that his proboscis is not bitten off in the engagement."

As even madmen at times are inspired to point out great truths, Randolph on this occasion showed to many of his colleagues, seemingly for the first time, that Great Britain was now fighting for liberty, and that she was the only remaining obstacle in the path of the ambition of that mighty despot who had risen in France.

His colleagues, however, were not willing to follow any of his suggestions, even when he proposed an embargo as a much more manly proceeding; for they were all thoroughly dumfounded and amazed by his attacks on the administration; and, two years later, they were still more dumfounded to hear him violently denounce an embargo, when enacted, as an instrument that would simply play into the hands of "that coward, Napoleon."

The speech by Randolph on this occasion had no result whatsoever in obstructing the passage of Jefferson's scheme of non-intercourse; but, for Randolph himself, it meant the destruction of all his hopes for future advancement within his party. He was forced to become the leader of a small faction of malcontents, and soon he was deserted even by these followers, who could not see their own fortunes engulfed with his.

The speech is notable, therefore, only as a brilliant index to the party passions that were then raging, and can be studied with profit only by those who wish to learn what chiefly to avoid in tactful political oratory.

John Randolph: On the Gregg Resolution

March 5, 1806

I am perfectly aware that upon entering on this subject we go into it manacled, handcuffed, and tongue-tied. Gentlemen know that our lips are sealed in subjects of momentous foreign relations which are indissolubly linked with the present question, and which would serve to throw a great light on it in every respect relevant to it. I will, however, endeavor to hobble over the subject as well as my fettered limbs and palsied tongue will enable me to do it.

I am not surprised to hear this resolution discussed by its friends as a war measure. They say, it is true, that it is not a war measure; but they defend it on principles which justify none but war measures, and seemed pleased with the idea that it may prove the forerunner of war. If war is necessary, if we have reached this point, let us have war. But while I have life, I will never consent to these incipient war measures, which in their commencement breathe nothing but peace, though they plunge us at last into war.

What is the question in dispute? The carrying trade. What part of it? The fair, the honest, and the useful trade that is engaged in carrying our own production to foreign markets and bringing back their productions in exchange? No, sir; it is that carrying trade which covers enemy's property, and carries the coffee, the sugar, and other West India products to the mother country.

No, sir; if this great agricultural nation is to be governed by Salem and Boston, New York and Philadelphia, Baltimore and Norfolk and Charleston, let gentlemen come out and say so; and let a committee of public safety be appointed from those towns to carry on the government.

I, for one, will not mortgage my property and my liberty to carry on this trade. The nation said so seven years ago; I said so then, and I say so now. It is not for the honest trade of America, but for this mushroom, this fungus of war—for a trade which, as soon as the nations of Europe are at peace, will no longer exist; it is for this that the spirit of avaricious traffic would plunge us into war.

But we are asked, are we willing to bend the neck to England; to submit to her outrages? No, sir, I answer that it will be time enough for us to tell gentlemen what we will do to vindicate the violation of our flag on the ocean when they shall have told us what they have done in resentment of the violation of the actual territory of the United States by Spain, the true territory of the United States—part of Georgia, of the old thirteen States, where citizens have been taken, not from our ships, but from our actual territory. When gentlemen have taken the padlock from our mouths, I shall be ready to tell them what I shall do relative to our dispute with Britain on the law of nations, on contraband, and such stuff.

I am averse to a naval war with any nation whatever. I was opposed to the naval war of the last administration, and I am as ready to oppose a naval war of the present administration, should they meditate such a measure. What! shall this great mammoth of the American forest leave his native element and plunge into the water in a mad contest with the shark? Let him beware that his proboscis is not bitten off in the engagement. Let him stay on shore, and not be excited by the mussels and periwinkles on the strand, or political bears, in a boat to venture on the perils of the deep.

Gentlemen say, will you not protect your violated rights?—and I say, why take to water, where you can neither fight nor swim? Look at France; see her vessels stealing from port to

port on her coast; and remember that she is the first military power of the earth, and as a naval people second only to England. Take away the British navy, and France to-morrow is the tyrant of the ocean. Sir, you may help to crush Great Britain—you may assist in breaking down her naval dominion, but you cannot succeed to it. The iron scepter of the ocean will pass into his hands who wears the iron crown of the land.

Gentlemen may take notes if they please; but I will never, from any motives short of self-defense, enter upon war. I will never be instrumental to the ambitious schemes of Bonaparte, nor put into his hands what will enable him to wield the world.

But sir, as French is the fashion of the day, I may be asked for my *projet*. I can readily tell gentlemen what I will not do. I will not propitiate any foreign nation with money. I will not launch into a naval war with Great Britain, although I am ready to meet her at Cowpens or Bunker's Hill. And for this plain reason. We are a great land animal, and our business is on shore.

I will send her no money, sir, on any pretext whatsoever, much less on pretense of buying Labrador or Botany Bay, when my real object was to secure limits which she formally acknowledged at the peace of 1783. I go farther—I would (if anything) have laid an embargo. This would have got our own property home and our adversary's into our power. If there is any wisdom left among us, the first step toward hostility will always be an embargo. In six months all our mercantile megrims will vanish. As to us, although it would cut deep, we can stand it. Without such a precaution, go to war when you will, you go to the wall.

I hope, sir, to be excused for proceeding in this desultory course. I flatter myself I shall not have occasion again to

trouble you; I know not that I shall be able—certainly not willing, unless provoked in self-defense.

I am sensible of having detained the committee longer than I ought—certainly much longer than I intended. I am equally sensible of their politeness, and not less so, sir, of your patient attention. It is your own indulgence, sir, badly requited indeed, to which you owe this persecution. I might offer another apology for these undigested, desultory remarks—my never having seen the treasury documents. Until I came into the House this morning I have been stretched on a sick bed.

Historical Setting of John Randolph's Speech on the Militia Bill

The various measures by which American statesmen attempted to cut off all commercial intercourse with Great Britain and France after the repeal of the embargo in 1809 were without effect in bringing either of the European belligerents to make any real concession to America. Both France and England, so far as each could, continued to prey upon our commerce; but Great Britain, having a decided advantage in naval warfare, naturally had many more opportunities to seize our ships and impress our seamen; and consequently the war fever in America steadily grew more and more against England and less and less against France.

The new Congress that assembled in the fall of 1811 was found to contain many new leaders, such as Henry Clay of Kentucky, and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, who had come to the national capital intent upon forcing the administration to declare war.

Henry Clay immediately assumed complete control of Congress; and, as Speaker of the House, he placed John C. Cal-

houn in a position of power, as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, where he might originate proposals for placing the nation in a state of defense. This, he did as soon as possible, when, on November 29, 1811, he led his committee to report that the country "had borne with injury until forbearance had ceased to be a virtue; and that the period has arrived, when, in the opinion of your committee, it is the sacred duty of Congress to call forth the patriotism and the resources of the country." The report closed with resolutions that called for a larger military establishment; for an additional force of ten thousand troops; for authorizing the President to accept the service of volunteers and to call out detachments of the militia; and for arming merchant vessels in self-defense.

This report was clearly intended to provide the first preparation for war; and in that light it was supported by members of Calhoun's committee, who boastfully predicted that in the coming war, not only Florida, but Canada might be added by conquest to our dominions.

On December 10, 1811, John Randolph entered the lists to defeat this warlike measure, for, though in principle he was always a Jeffersonian-Republican and therefore should have been pro-French and anti-British, he had nevertheless a strange love for the mother country and all its customs, conventions, and traditions. There was no more pro-British advocate in America than he, and he could not abide the thought of war with that country.

The speech by Randolph on this occasion is decidedly the best specimen of his eloquence, containing some sublime passages that show our debt of filial gratitude to Great Britain for her accomplishments in art, science, literature, religion, and government; but when it was met by the burning retort of Calhoun in debate, it counted for nothing in the strife to ob-

struct the on-coming war. The committee's report was adopted; the preparations for war were hastily made; and seven months later, in spite of Randolph's constant opposition, the country embarked upon the second war of independence to secure its freedom from the domination of the mother country.

John Randolph: On the Militia Bill

December 10, 1811

Mr. Speaker, this is a question, as it has been presented to this House, of peace or war. In that light it has been argued; in no other light can I consider it, after the declarations made by the Committee on Foreign Relations.

It seems that in 1808 we talked and acted foolishly, and to give some color of consistency to that folly, we must now commit another far greater. Really I cannot conceive of a weaker reason, offered in support of a present measure, than the justification of a former folly. I hope we shall act a wise part; taking warning by our follies, since we have become sensible of them, and resolve to talk and act foolishly no more. It is, indeed, high time to give over such preposterous language and proceedings.

I am gratified to find gentlemen acknowledging the demoralizing and destructive consequences of the non-importation law; confessing the truth of all that its opponents foretold, when it was enacted. And will you plunge yourselves into war, because you have passed a foolish and ruinous law, and are ashamed to repeal it? "But our good friend, the French emperor, stands in the way of its repeal, and as we cannot go too far in making sacrifices to him, who has given such demonstration of his love for the Americans, we must, in point of fact, become parties to his war. Who can be so cruel as

to refuse him that favor?" My imagination shrinks from the miseries of such a connection.

Imputations, I know, of British influence have been uttered against the opponents of this war; but against whom are these charges brought? Against men, who, in the War of the Revolution, were in the councils of the nation, or fighting the battles of your country. And by whom are these charges made? By runaways chiefly from the British dominions, since the breaking out of the French troubles.

Strange! that we should have no objection to any other people or government, civilized or savage, in the whole world, but the English! The great autocrat of all the Russias receives the homage of our high consideration. The Dey of Algiers and his divan of pirates are very civil, good sort of people, with whom we find no difficulty in maintaining the relations of peace and amity. "Turks, Jews, and Infidels," Melimelli or the Little Turtle: barbarians and savages of every clime and color are welcome to our arms. With chiefs of banditti, negro or mulatto, we can treat and trade.

Name, however, but England, and all our antipathies are up in arms against her. Against whom? Against those whose blood runs in our veins; in common with whom we claim Shakespeare, and Newton, and Chatham, for our countrymen; whose form of government is the freest on earth, our own only excepted; from whom every valuable principle of our own institutions has been borrowed—representation, jury trial, voting the supplies, writs of *habeas corpus,* our whole civil and criminal jurisprudence;—against our fellow Protestants, identified in blood, in language, in religion, with ourselves.

In what school did the worthies of our land, the Washingtons, Henrys, Hancocks, Franklins, Rutledges of America, learn those principles of civil liberty, which were so nobly asserted by their wisdom and their valor? American resistance

to British usurpation has not been more warmly cherished by these great men and their compatriots; not more by Washington, Hancock, and Henry, than by Chatham and his illustrious associates in the British Parliament.

It ought to be remembered, too, that the heart of the English people was with us. It was a selfish and corrupt ministry, and their servile tools, to whom we were not more opposed than they were. I trust that none such may ever exist among us; for tools will never be wanting to subserve the purposes, however ruinous or wicked, of kings and ministers of state.

I acknowledge the influence of a Shakespeare and a Milton upon my imagination, of a Locke upon my understanding, of a Sidney upon my political principles, of a Chatham upon qualities which, would to God I possessed in common with that illustrious man! of a Tillotson, a Sherlock, and a Porteus upon my religion. This is a British influence which I can never shake off.

If it were allowable to entertain partialities, every consideration of blood, language, religion, and interest would incline us toward England: and yet, shall they alone be extended to France and her ruler, whom we are bound to believe a chastening God suffers as the scourge of a guilty world! On all other nations he tramples; he holds them in contempt; England alone he hates; he would, but he cannot, despise her; fear cannot despise; and shall we disparage our ancestors?

But the outrages and injuries of England, I, bred up in the principles of the Revolution, can never palliate, much less defend them. I well remember flying, with my mother and her new-born child, from Arnold and Phillips; and we were driven by Tarleton and other British Pandours from pillar to post, while her husband was fighting the battles of his country. The impression is indelible on my memory; and yet (like my worthy old neighbor, who added seven buckshot to every car-

tridge at the battle of Guilford, and drew fine sight at his man) I must be content to be called a Tory by a patriot of the last importation.

Let us not get rid of one evil (supposing it possible) at the expense of a greater; for *mutatis mutandis,* change and change about, suppose France in possession of the British naval power —and to her the trident must pass, should England be unable to wield it—what would be your condition? What would be the situation of your seaports, and their seafaring inhabitants? Ask Hamburg, Lubec! Ask Savannah!

Shall Republicans become the instruments of him who has effaced the title of Attila to the "scourge of God!" Yet even Attila, in the falling fortunes of civilization, had, no doubt, his advocates, his tools, his minions, his parasites, in the very countries that he overran; sons of that soil whereon his horse had trod, where grass could never after grow.

If perfectly fresh, instead of being as I am, my memory clouded, my intellect stupified, my strength and spirits exhausted, I could not give utterance to that strong detestation which I feel toward such characters as Gengis, Tamerlane, Kouli-Khan, or Bonaparte, above all other works of creation. My instincts involuntarily revolt at their bare idea. Malefactors of the human race, who have ground down man to a mere machine of their impious and bloody ambition! Yet under all the accumulated wrongs, and insults, and robberies of the last of these chieftains, are we not, in point of fact, about to become a party to his views, a partner in his wars?

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE PERIOD OF JOHN RANDOLPH—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Gouverneur Morris: *Against the Repeal of the Judiciary Act* (1802)—See *Williston's Eloquence of U. S.* (1827) II, 100-125; Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) I, 457-465.

2. DeWitt Clinton: *On Navigation of the Mississippi* (1803)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* II, 235-263; Moore's *American Eloquence* I, 567-576.
3. Gouverneur Morris: *Eulogy of Hamilton* (1804)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 487-488; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) VIII, 212-215; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) V, 314-317.
4. Harrison Gray Otis: *Eulogy of Hamilton* (1804)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* V, 191-206; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* I, 559-564.
5. Eliphalet Nott: *Eulogy of Hamilton* (1804)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* V, 207-229; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) VIII,186-195.
6. John Randolph: *On the Gregg Resolution* (1806)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 159-169; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* VIII, 186-195.
7. William Wirt: *At the Trial of Aaron Burr* (1807)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 461-469; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) V, 2135-2140; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* X, 262-264.
8. Josiah Quincy: *On the Embargo* (1808)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* II, 371-390.
9. James A. Bayard: *For Repeal of the Embargo* (1809)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* II, 486-516; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 80-91.
10. Josiah Quincy: *On the Admission of Louisiana* (1811)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* II, 415-438; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) III, 180-204; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) IV, 1663-1670.
11. John Randolph: *On the Militia Bill* (1811)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* II, 455-473; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 181-187; Johnston and Woodburn III, 164-179.
12. John C. Calhoun: *On the Militia Bill* (1811)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* II, 474-485; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 475-479.
13. John Randolph: *On the Tariff* (1824)—See Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) IV, 1697-1725.
14. John Randolph: *The Puritan and the Blackleg* (1826)—See Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) IX, 31-36.

Historical Backgrounds

See Henry Adams's *History of U. S.* (III); Bowers's *Jefferson and Hamilton;* Channing's *History of U. S.* (IV); Hart's *Formation of the Union;* Higginson's *Larger History of U. S.;* Hildreth's *History of U. S.;* Hill's *Decisive Battles of the Law* (see Burr); Larned's *History of Ready Reference;* McCaleb's *The Aaron Burr Conspiracy;* McMaster's *History of the People of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Walker's *Making of the Nation;* Wandel and Minnigerode's *Aaron Burr.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Calhoun, John C.—See biographies by Jenkins, Von Holst, Pinckney, and Hunt.
Clinton, DeWitt—See biography by Campbell.
Morris, Gouverneur—See biography by Roosevelt.
Quincy, Josiah—See biography by Edmund Quincy.
Randolph, John—See biographies by Garland, Adams, and Bruce.
Wirt, William—See biography by Kennedy.

See also biographies of Jefferson by Tucker, Parton, and Morse; of Burr by Parton; and of Madison by Rives, and Gay.

For biographical sketches of Bayard, Nott, Otis, and others, see Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of American Biography.*

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Randolph's *Speech on the Gregg Resolution*

I. What is the meaning of Randolph's figures: (1) "manacled, handcuffed, tongue-tied"; (2) "this mushroom, this fungus of war"; (3) "mussels and periwinkles on the strand"; (4) "political bears"?

II. What internal evidence is there that Randolph was familiar with the details of Napoleon's coronation ceremony as King of Italy?

III. What was the meaning of Randolph's insinuation, that he would propitiate no foreign nation with money?

IV. What were: (1) the verdict of the nation on the carrying trade in 1799; (2) the outrages of England; (3) the actual violations of our territory by Spain; (4) the naval war of the last administration; (5) Cowpens; (6) Botany Bay?

V. What justification had Randolph: (1) for calling America in 1806 a great land animal; (2) for implying that the nation was governed by Salem, Boston, etc.?

On Randolph's *Speech on the Militia Bill*

I. What was the meaning of Randolph's expressions: (1) "Ask Hamburg"; (2) "Ask Lubec"; (3) "Ask Savannah"?

II. What internal evidence is there that Randolph was familiar with: (1) the classical myths of Neptune; (2) Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;* (3) the story of Marco Polo?

III. Who were: (1) the autocrat of all the Russias in 1811; (2) Melimelli; (3) Little Turtle; (4) Newton; (5) Chatham; (6) Locke; (7) Sidney; (8) Tillotson; (9) Sherlock; (10) Porteus; (11) Arnold; (12) Phillips; (13) Tarleton; (14) Attila; (15) Gengis; (16) Tamerlane; (17) Kouli-Khan?

IV. What were: (1) the foolish talk in 1808; (2) the French origin of fraternization in war; (3) the reasons for Randolph's horror of French fraternity on the Southwest?—See Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America,* I, Chap. IX.

V. What implied reference does Randolph make to: (1) "Tom" Paine, William Cobbett, Dr. Joseph Priestley; (2) John Quincy Adams; (3) William Eaton, Tobias Lear, Stephen Decatur—See Appleton's *Cyclopaedia of Am. Biography,* and *Encyclopaedia Britannica;* (4) Anthony Wayne and the *Treaty of Greenville* [1795]; (5) Tobias Lear and Toussaint L'Ouverture; (6) Felix Grundy?

Dictionary Studies from John Randolph

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. avaricious 2. contraband 3. desultory 4. fungus 5. handcuffed 6. incipient 7. indissolubly 8. megrims 9. mortgage 10. palsied 11. periwinkle 12. proboscis 13. relevant

1. autocrat 2. chastening 3. dey 4. disparage 5. divan 6. *habeas corpus* 7. malefactors 8. minions 9. parasites 10. scourge 11. servile 12. usurpation

CHAPTER V

HENRY CLAY

The Great Triumvirate and Orators of the Period of Clay's Pre-eminence

For approximately forty years in American history, between 1812 and 1852, three great names stand out above all others as those of America's most distinguished political orators. These names are those of Clay, Webster, and Calhoun, who together are spoken of as the "Great Triumvirate."

During these forty years, there were times when all three of these statesmen-orators seemed to be equally conspicuous, and yet there were other times when one or another might claim dominance.

During the War of 1812, for example, Clay and Calhoun were dominant, with Clay in the position of supremacy. Then, for nearly a decade, Clay maintained his supremacy, while Calhoun, in the latter part of the decade, was silenced by being a member of the cabinet in Monroe's administrations from 1817 to 1825, and while, at the same time, Webster was winning his spurs, in the courts, on the platform, and in the lower House of Congress.

The decade of the twenties was shared between Clay and Webster on almost equal terms, but with Webster's fame rapidly growing to overshadow that of Clay, while, for four years, between 1825 and 1829, Clay was silenced by being Secretary-of-State in the cabinet of John Quincy Adams, and while, for a longer period from 1825 to 1833, Calhoun was

silenced by occupying the presidency of the Senate in his capacity as Vice President of the nation.

The year 1833 belongs pre-eminently to Calhoun, for, in that year, he brought to a climax his struggle for the South Carolina doctrine of Nullification; but, in this year, both Webster and Clay shared the honors with him, Webster, being his chief antagonist, and Clay, serving as peace-maker between them on behalf of the nation.

Between 1833 and 1837, these great giants found themselves all working together on equal terms of eminence in futile, but brilliant, opposition to Andrew Jackson.

Then came a period in the forties of unaccustomed silence for all three, with Webster removed from the Senate for a brief period while he was Secretary-of-State under President Harrison, with Clay in retirement after 1842 though he was a candidate for the presidency in 1844, and with Calhoun as Secretary-of-State under President Tyler.

During the Mexican War, Webster and Calhoun were again in the Senate; and, from vastly different motives, they, as leaders of equal eminence, opposed the policies of President Polk in schemes for unlimited expansion of our territory.

When the Mexican War was over, however, the Great Triumvirate was restored to the Senate upon Clay's return to that body, and they held their last brilliant tournament of oratory in 1850, when Clay and Webster united in advocating the historic compromise of that year to placate Calhoun and his following in the South, for the preservation of the Union.

During the whole period of the ascendancy of the Triumvirs, we find, therefore, that some years brought out all three with equal prominence, and that other years were predominantly given over to the oratorical leadership of one among them.

That period which belongs to Henry Clay was the decade

beginning with the War of 1812; for, in this decade, Clay led the country into war with England. Then, after the war, especially from 1817 onward, Clay became the foremost advocate in Congress of internal improvements, which meant the building of roads and the maintaining of water communication with the interior. At this same time Clay became the most conspicuous and brilliant advocate of recognizing the independence of South American countries then in revolt against Spain. In 1819, he led the active opposition to the rising political influence of Andrew Jackson, the hero of New Orleans and the over-energetic commander of the United States forces in the Seminole War, who involved us in difficulties both with Spain and England by his arbitrary conduct in capturing Spanish posts in Florida and in hanging British subjects who were implicated in Indian raids on Georgia. Then, in 1820, it was Clay who pushed through Congress the Missouri Compromise to save the country from disruption in the first serious clash between North and South on the slavery question. And after the Missouri Compromise, it was Clay who brought forward, and established through his eloquence, the so-called "American System," which consisted in protection for American infant industries by means of a high tariff and the expenditure of national revenue, obtained from the tariff, for extensive internal improvements.

Throughout this period, Clay was undoubtedly the foremost political orator of America, but he was, by no means, the only great political orator; nor was political oratory at this time confined to the Great Triumvirate, inasmuch as John Randolph was continuously a power to be reckoned with, though he was regarded as a "nuisance and a curse."

The debates of Congress on the Missouri question in 1819 and 1820 brought out a flood of oratory such as had not been

witnessed in American legislative councils since the debates on the Jay Treaty in 1796. In this crisis, James Tallmadge of New York and John W. Taylor of the same State rose to temporary prominence, which promised for both, and especially for Tallmadge, a fame equal at least to that of Fisher Ames.

These two orators obtained their reputation for eloquence from speeches on the Missouri question delivered in the House of Representatives; and then two other orators arose to great prominence—Rufus King of New York and William Pinkney of Maryland—by brilliant and statesmanlike speeches on the same subject delivered in the Senate.

The only competitors, therefore, for Clay's position of supremacy in oratory during the decade beginning with the War of 1812, outside the Great Triumvirate, were John Randolph, James Tallmadge, John W. Taylor, Rufus King, and William Pinkney.

John Randolph, however, had passed his zenith, and the other competitors were obviously only stars that shone for a brief moment in the firmament.

With all competitors eliminated, therefore, even among the Triumvirs, in this period of American history, it is safe to say that then Henry Clay was the dominant political orator of America and that thereafter he shared his laurels with only two other statesmen who may be considered as his peers.

The Life of Henry Clay

Henry Clay of Kentucky was the most brilliant, the most fascinating, and the most popular political orator in America during the first half of the nineteenth century. In history, he is known as the chief advocate of the War of 1812; the "Great

Compromiser," who three times saved the Union from threatened dissolution; and the peerless leader of his party in advocating protection for American industries and the extension of internal improvements; a member of the "Great Triumvirate" of statesmen, embracing the names of Webster, Clay, and Calhoun; and three times a promising, though unsuccessful, candidate of the Whigs for the presidency of the United States.

This great statesman and orator was born in Hanover County, near Richmond, Virginia, in 1777. His early life was spent in poverty and hardship, winning for him, however, a title, afterwards used to advantage in his campaigns for the presidency—"The Mill Boy of the Slashes."

When fifteen years of age, he moved to Richmond, and there attracted the favorable notice of Chancellor Wythe, who made him his emanuensis in recording the decisions of the high court of Virginia. Clay's training in this position led him soon to study law; and, to promote his aspirations in this direction, Clay became the founder and leader of one of the most fashionable debating societies among the younger set at the Virginia capital.

His opportunities for advancement in a community so filled with eminent men were meager, however; and, accordingly, in 1797, he moved west to Lexington, Kentucky, where he determined "to grow up with the country." There he founded another debating society, and speedily won such recognition for his eloquence, both in this body and in the courts, that he was chosen a member of the Kentucky legislature.

There he immediately became a leader; and, in 1806, as well as in 1809, he was elected to fill out two unexpired terms as the representative of his State in the United States Senate. There also he was instantly acknowledged to be one of the most powerful leaders; and, in 1811, when he appeared again

in Washington, for the first time as a member of the House of Representatives, he was given the unprecedented honor of being chosen to be Speaker of the House, a position that he continued to occupy with distinction and almost without interruption until the year 1825.

In the preceding year, Clay had been a candidate for the presidency, but, failing to obtain that office, he accepted the position of Secretary-of-State in the cabinet of John Quincy Adams. Twice, again, he was to be a candidate for the presidency in 1832 and in 1844; but on both occasions he was doomed to disappointment; for in those years it would have been impossible for him or any other member of his party to win.

Clay continued, however, to be quite as prominent, and even more influential, out of the presidency, than he would have been, had he been elected to this office. In 1831, he began his long career as a United States Senator, sitting for eleven years until 1842 as a member of the upper House; and then, after an interval of seven years, he appeared once more in his accustomed place, at one of the most crucial times in American history, from 1849, until his death in 1852.

Of Henry Clay, it has been said that the story of his public life is the history of his country. Taking his seat in the House of Representatives in 1811 as a War Democrat, with the able assistance of one or two lieutenants, such as John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, he immediately became the great champion of war, forcing the timid hand of Madison to undertake hostilities, breathing into the South and West a fervid spirit of militant patriotism, crushing forever the Federalist spirit of opposition and rebellion in New England, preaching extravagantly of the conquest of Canada, upholding the nation in its many dreary reverses, and encouraging it whenever a brilliant victory

came; then, at last, serving as commissioner to negotiate the treaty of peace at Ghent, and obtaining from England none of the things for which he had fought, but all that could be had under the most unfavorable circumstances.

Though Clay had failed to accomplish the desired object of the war, he had, nevertheless, accomplished a result of far greater importance: he had destroyed utterly the old feeling of colonial subserviency, and had created a new spirit of nationality.

Taking advantage of this newly created spirit of national pride, he became one of the foremost advocates of a strong centralized government, displaying its power abroad by opposition to the Holy Alliance and by supporting in South America and in Greece the cause of the revolutionists; while at home he sought to build solid foundations for wide-spread prosperity through internal improvements on roads and waterways, through high protective tariffs, and through an all-powerful United States Bank.

The three great achievements of Henry Clay as a statesman came, however, at various times when he acted as mediator and peace-maker between the North and South: first, in 1820, when, by the sheer force of his eloquence, he secured the adoption of the Missouri Compromise; second, in 1833, when, by another compromise, he undermined the Nullification project of Calhoun and prevented the State of South Carolina from entering upon open rebellion; and finally, in 1850, when, by his last great compromise, he saved the Union from imminent dissolution and postponed for a decade the inevitable war between the States.

For a period of forty years, Clay stood in the very front rank of American statesmen, and maintained his position there almost solely by his captivating powers of oratory. As a

lawyer, in his younger years, his pleas before juries were considered to be irresistible, and Aaron Burr, when apprehended in 1806, engaged him for counsel, as one of the ablest advocates in Kentucky. Clay's greatest talent was displayed, however, on the stump and in legislative bodies. When going to and from Washington, his journeys resembled a royal progress, with receptions and pageants everywhere and committees of welcome escorting him from one town to the next all along the way; while, in Congress, his speeches were regarded always as overwhelming, and not to be met or overcome until the excitement caused by his speaking had passed away.

His greatest utterances were, without doubt, his speech on *The New Army Bill* in 1813, when he shook the House of Representatives with his denunciation of the Essex Junto and his appeal for the rights of American seamen; his speech on *The Emancipation of South America,* in 1818, when he portrayed the possibilities of a united America against the Holy Alliance; his speech on *The Seminole War,* in 1819, when he assailed the conduct of General Andrew Jackson as threatening to replace civil authority in government with a military despotism; his speech on *The Greek Revolution* in 1824, which is described as one of the most dazzling appeals for the aggrandizement of his country; his speech in the same year on *The American System,* which meant a high protective tariff; his speech in 1833 on *The Compromise Tariff,* in which he repelled the charge of selfish ambition; his speech in 1837 on *The Expunging Resolution,* filled full of grim satire against his great rival, Andrew Jackson; his *Valedictory to the Senate* in 1842; and his speech on *The Compromise Measures of 1850,* which marked the end of his long career.

Of Henry Clay, it may be said that, in his day, he stood unrivaled as a political orator in the forum. His speeches,

compared with those of Webster, were not logical or profound and lacked permanent value. "In all the discussion of the Senate," says Blaine, in his *Thirty Years of Congress,* "on constitutional questions, Mr. Clay instinctively deferred to Mr. Webster; but in parliamentary debates, which concerned the position of parties and the fate of measures, which enchained the Senate and led captive the people, Mr. Clay was easily first. Mr. Webster argued the principle; Mr. Clay embodied it in a statute." Webster delivered speeches that still may be read with interest and studied with profit; but the speeches of Clay are now read with disappointment. They were such speeches as Charles James Fox delivered to crowded audiences in the British House of Commons, speeches that commanded the attention and applause of listening thousands, yet speeches that were likely to perish with their delivery. To comprehend the greatness of Henry Clay as an orator, it may be necessary to imagine ourselves under the direct influence of his magnetic personality. His fame, in great measure, must rest upon the tradition of his hearers; but, if we are to believe their testimony, he was easily the most brilliant, the most fascinating, and the most popular political orator of the first half of the nineteenth century in America.

Historical Setting of Clay's Speech on the New Army Bill

The speech by Henry Clay on *The New Army Bill,* delivered before the House of Representatives on January 8 and 9, 1813, was one of the most brilliant specimens of his parliamentary eloquence. It was given during one of the greatest crises of the War of 1812, when the nation was depressed by the ignominious surrender of General Hull, the American commander

at Detroit, and by the news of other inglorious attempts to invade Canada at Niagara and on Lake Champlain; when all talk of dictating peace at Quebec or at Halifax seemed ridiculous, and when it appeared that, even before the declaration of war, Great Britain had removed all cause for hostilities except the one disputed point of her right to impress American seamen.

When Congress met in the fall of 1812, there had been no difficulty in passing bills to augment the navy, which had been the sole source of pride to America in the conflict thus far; but the bill to re-enforce the army met with savage opposition. From the very outset, New England had been violently opposed to the war; and, at this time its leading spokesman, Josiah Quincy, came forth to denounce the whole war policy.

His speech in opposition to the *New Army Bill* has almost never been excelled in our parliamentary history for its brilliant diction and its extravagantly bitter spirit. Our futile attempt to conquer Canada, he described as a "buccaneering expedition, an act of blood-thirsty cruelty against unoffending neighbors." It was "a disgrace" to our arms, and he thanked God that the people of New England "had done what they could to vindicate themselves and their children from the burden of this sin." An honorable peace could not be obtained in this way, he said; and then fixing his eye on Clay, the Speaker of the House, he exclaimed: "Those must be very young politicians, their pin-feathers not yet grown, and, however they may flutter on this floor, they are not yet fledged for any high or distant flight, who think that threats and appealing to fear are the ways of producing any disposition to negotiate in Great Britain, or in any other nation which understands what it owes to its own safety and honor." Since Great Britain had yielded in respect to its Orders in Council, he

declared the war to be unnecessary; and he accused the administration with being rabidly anti-British and pro-French in its policies. Then vigorously attacking Napoleon as a monster, he concluded with the assertion that he would do anything for maritime or frontier defense, but nothing "for the conquest of any country, either as a means of carrying on this war or for any other purpose."

This bitter attack stung Clay to the quick and placed him in a most embarrassing position, though he saw quickly the weakness of his opponent's plea in appearing to be unpatriotic at a time of crisis during an unsuccessful war against an hereditary enemy. He, therefore, descended from the Speaker's chair with a spirit of deep indignation, prepared to throw down the gauntlet to his adversaries, to catch them in the trap they had set for themselves, and then, by one mighty effort, to restore, if possible, the morale of Congress and of the nation for the prosecution of the war to a successful termination.

On January 8, he began his great speech, defending the administrations of Jefferson and Madison for their long drawn-out efforts to maintain peace, denouncing the Federalists for their inconsistency in favoring war and then opposing it, denying all sympathy on the part of the government for the imperialistic plottings of Napoleon, accusing his opponents of taking a European viewpoint rather than one befitting Americans in an American Congress, eulogizing Jefferson as a great savior of the nation's liberties, and branding with eternal infamy the proceedings of the Essex Junto that had at one time attempted to strangle the people's freedom by the *Alien* and *Sedition Laws*, that at another time had threatened to dismember the Union, and that now was treasonably plotting to bring defeat to the national arms.

So much Clay was able to bring out after hours of speaking

on the first day devoted to this great and crushing reply; but on the morrow, once more, he returned to his overwhelming attack, justifying the war because England had put restraints upon our commerce; because she persisted in impressing our seamen; because she had instigated Indian wars against us; and because she had refused indemnities for our injuries. He declared that he would fight France also, but one war at a time was enough; and the war with England must proceed if only one point of difference remained—that of impressment of American seamen. Then, proceeding to put forth with all his melodramatic power our obligation to our gallant tars, he is said to have drawn tears from the eyes of his listeners; and quickly adding that it was necessary to prosecute the war wherever we could strike, he swept everything before him in a final appeal to fight on land and sea, till Canada was conquered; and, at Quebec or Halifax, America might then dictate its terms of peace to a prostrate foe.

Not since the time of Fisher Ames had a speech so eloquent as this been heard within the halls of the American Congress. By its overwhelming appeal to patriotism, all opposition to the course of the administration was rendered futile. The increase in the army was then and there voted; and the country was roused, as by a bugle-call, to prosecute the war to a successful termination.

Henry Clay: On the New Army Bill

January 8-9, 1813

Mr. Chairman, I was a little astonished, I confess, when I found this bill permitted to pass silently through the committee of the whole, and not selected, until the moment when the question was about to be put for its third reading, as the sub-

ject on which gentlemen in the opposition chose to lay before the House their views of the interesting attitude in which the nation stands.

Considering the situation in which this country is now placed—a state of actual war with one of the most powerful nations on the earth—it may not be useless to take a view of the past, and of the various parties which have, at different times, appeared in this country, and to attend to the manner, by which we have been driven from a peaceful posture to our present warlike attitude.

It has been alike the duty and the interest of the administration to preserve peace; and no art has been left unessayed; no experiment promising a favorable result, left untried, to maintain the peaceful relations of the country.

When, some six or seven years ago, the affairs of the nation assumed a threatening aspect, a partial non-importation was adopted. As they grew more alarming, an embargo was imposed. It would have accomplished its purpose, but it was sacrificed upon the altar of conciliation. Vain and fruitless attempt to propitiate! Then came a law of non-intercourse; and a general non-importation followed in the train.

In the meantime, any indications of a return to the public law and the path of justice, on the part of either belligerent, are seized upon with avidity by the administration; but whilst these peaceful experiments are undergoing a trial, what is the conduct of the opposition? They are the champions of war; the proud, the spirited, the sole repository of the nation's honor; the men of exclusive vigor and energy. The administration, on the contrary, is weak, feeble, and pusillanimous—"incapable of being kicked into a war." The maxim, "not a cent for tribute, millions for defense," is loudly proclaimed. Is the administration for negotiation? The opposition is tired,

sick, disgusted with negotiation. They want to draw the sword and avenge the nation's wrongs. When, however, foreign nations, perhaps emboldened by the very opposition here made, refuse to listen to the amicable appeals, which have been repeated and reiterated by the administration, to their justice and their interests; when, in fact, war with one of them has become identified with our independence and our sovereignty, and to abstain from it was no longer possible, behold the opposition veering round and becoming the friends of peace and commerce. They tell you of the calamities of war, its tragical events, the squandering away of your resources, the waste of the public treasure, and the spilling of innocent blood. "Gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire." They tell you that honor is an illusion! Now we see them exhibiting the terrific forms of the roaring king of the forest: now the meekness and humility of the lamb! They are for war and no restrictions, when the administration is for peace. They are for peace and restrictions, when the administration is for war. You find them, sir, tacking with every gale, displaying the colors of every party and of all nations, steady only in one unalterable purpose, to steer, if possible, into the haven of power.

During all this time, the parasites of opposition do not fail, by cunning sarcasm or sly innuendo, to throw out the idea of French influence, which is known to be false, which ought to be met in one manner only, and that is by the lie direct. The administration of this country devoted to foreign influence! The administration of this country subservient to France! Great God! what a charge! how is it so influenced?

Throughout the period I have been speaking of, the opposition has been distinguished, amidst all its veerings and changes, by another inflexible feature, the application to Bonaparte of

every vile and opprobrious epithet, our language, copious as it is in terms of vituperation, affords. He has been compared to every hideous monster and beast, from that mentioned in the revelations, down to the most insignificant quadruped. He has been called the scourge of mankind, the destroyer of Europe, the great robber, the infidel, the modern Attila, and heaven knows by what other names.

Really, gentlemen remind me of an obscure lady, in a city not very far off, who also took it into her head, in conversation with an accomplished French gentleman, to talk of the affairs of Europe. The Frenchman listened to her with perfect patience, and when she had ceased, said to her, with ineffable politeness: "Madam, it would give my master, the emperor, infinite pain, if he knew how hardly you thought of him."

Sir, gentlemen appear to me to forget that they stand on American soil; that they are not in the British House of Commons, but in the chamber of the House of Representatives of the United States; that we have nothing to do with the affairs of Europe, the partition of territory and sovereignty there, except so far as these things affect the interests of our own country. Gentlemen transform themselves into Burkes, Chathams, and Pitts of another country, and forgetting from honest zeal the interests of America, engage with European sensibility in the discussion of European interests.

If, gentlemen ask me, whether I do not view with regret and horror the concentration of such vast power in the hands of Bonaparte—I reply that I do. I regret to see the Emperor of China holding such immense sway over the fortunes of millions of our species. I regret to see Great Britain possessing so uncontrolled a command over all the waters of our globe. If I had the ability to distribute among the nations of Europe their several portions of power and sovereignty, I

would say that Holland should be resuscitated, and given the weight she enjoyed in the days of her DeWitts. I would confine France within her natural boundaries, the Alps, Pyrenees, and the Rhine, and make her a secondary naval power only. I would abridge the British maritime power, raise Prussia and Austria to their original condition, and preserve the integrity of the empire of Russia.

But these are speculations. I look at the political transactions of Europe, with the single exception of their possible bearing upon us, as I do at the history of other countries, or other times. I do not survey them with half the interest that I do the movements in South America. Our political relation with them is much less important than it is supposed to be. I have no fears of French or English subjugation. If we are united, we are too powerful for the mightiest nation in Europe, or all Europe combined. If we are separated and torn asunder, we shall become an easy prey to the weakest of them. In the latter dreadful contingency, our country will not be worth preserving.

Next to the notice which the opposition has found itself called upon to bestow upon the French emperor a distinguished citizen of Virginia, formerly President of the United States, has never for a moment failed to receive their kindest and most respectful attention. An honorable member from Massachusetts, (Mr. Quincy,) of whom I am sorry to say, it becomes necessary for me, in the course of my remarks, to take some notice, has alluded to him in a remarkable manner. Neither his retirement from public office, his eminent services, nor his advanced age, can exempt this patriot from the coarse assaults of party malevolence. No, sir, in 1801, he snatched from the rude hand of usurpation the violated Constitution of his country, and that is his crime. He pre-

served that instrument in form, and substance, and spirit, a precious inheritance in generations to come, and for this he can never be forgiven. How vain and impotent is party rage directed against such a man! He is not more elevated by his lofty residence upon the summit of his own favorite mountain, than he is lifted, by the serenity of his mind and the consciousness of a well-spent life, above the malignant passions and bitter feelings of the day. No! his own beloved Montecello is not more moved by the storms that beat against its sides, than is this illustrious man, by the howlings of the whole British pack set loose from the Essex kennel!

When the gentleman, to whom I have been compelled to allude, shall have mingled his dust with that of his abused ancestors; when he shall have been consigned to oblivion, or if he lives at all, shall live only in the treasonable annals of a certain junto; the name of Jefferson will be hailed with gratitude, his memory honored and cherished as the second founder of the liberties of the people, and the period of his administration will be looked back to, as one of the brightest and happiest epochs of American history—an oasis in the midst of a sandy desert.

We are told by gentlemen in opposition that government has not done all that was incumbent on it to do, to avoid just cause of complaint on the part of Great Britain; that, in particular, the certificates of protection, authorized by the act of 1796, are fraudulently used. Sir, government has done too much in granting those paper protections. I can never think of them without being shocked. They resemble the passes which the master grants to his negro slave—"let the bearer, Mungo, pass and repass without molestation." What do they imply? That Great Britain has a right to seize all who are not provided with them. From their very nature,

they must be liable to abuse on both sides. If Great Britain desires a mark by which she can know her own subjects, let her give them an ear-mark. The colors that float from the mast head should be the credentials of our seamen. There is no safety to us, and the gentlemen have shown it, but in the rule that all who sail under the flag, (not being enemies,) are protected by the flag.

It is impossible that this country should ever abandon the gallant tars, who have won for us such splendid trophies. Let me suppose that the genius of Columbia should visit one of them in his oppressor's prison, and attempt to reconcile him to his forlorn and wretched condition. She would say to him in language of gentlemen on the other side: "Great Britain intends you no harm; she did not mean to impress you, but one of her own subjects; having taken you by mistake, I will demonstrate and try to prevail upon her, by peaceful means, to release you, but I cannot, my son, fight for you."

If he did not consider this mere mockery, the poor tar would address her judgment, and say: "You owe me, my country, protection; I owe you, in return, obedience. I am no British subject; I am a native of old Massachusetts, where live my aged father, my wife, and my children. I have faithfully discharged my duty. Will you refuse to do yours?" Appealing to her passions, he would continue: "I lost this eye in fighting under Truxton, with the *Insurgente;* I got this scar before Tripoli; I broke this leg on board the *Constitution,* when the *Guerriere* struck." If she remained still unmoved, he would break out, in the accents of mingled distress and despair.

"Hard, hard is my fate! once I freedom enjoyed,
Was as happy as happy could be!
Oh! how hard is my fate, how galling these chains!"

Sir, an honorable peace is attainable only by an efficient war. My plan would be to call out the ample resources of the country, give them a judicious direction, prosecute the war with utmost vigor, strike wherever we can reach the enemy, at sea or on land, and negotiate the terms of peace at Quebec or at Halifax. We are told that England is a proud and lofty nation, which, disdaining to wait for danger, meets it half way. Haughty as she is, we once triumphed over her, and, if we do not listen to the councils of timidity and despair, we shall again prevail. In such a cause, with the aid of Providence, we must come out crowned with success; but, if we fail, let us fail like men, lash ourselves to our gallant tars, and expire together in one common struggle, fighting for FREE TRADE AND SEAMAN'S RIGHTS.

Historical Setting of Clay's Speech on the Greek Revolution

The winter months of 1823 and 1824 witnessed in America a most remarkable expression of sympathy for the peoples of South America and of Europe who were struggling for independence against autocratic rulers; for, in December, 1823, President Monroe announced to the world the doctrine that bears his name, informing European powers that the United States did not intend to interfere in the domestic affairs of Europe and that it would not tolerate further attempts to colonize on the American continent nor any attempts on the part of European powers to interfere in the domestic concerns of Latin American countries that had established their independence. And then, in January, 1824, the whole country seemed to be swept by what was called the "Philhellenic fever," which was a strange outburst of emotion, manifesting

itself in general and spontaneous expressions of sympathy for the cause of Greece in her war of independence against the Turks.

This war in Greece was a direct result of the propaganda of freedom, spread throughout Europe in the years following the French Revolution; for, early in the nineteenth century, Greek scholars caught the revolutionary spirit of France and began to create a feeling of nationalism among their countrymen by a revival of Greek literature on classical models.

The revolution was not ripe, however, until 1821; and then, as if by concert, bands of patriots arose in rebellion under the leadership of petty chieftains and Greek priests in all parts of the country. For three years, these bands swept everything before them, crushing all resistance, massacring the Turkish population, and slaughtering Turkish garrisons amid scenes of fearful carnage.

During the first part of this contest, Christian Europe as a whole, under the leadership of Metternich and the Holy Alliance, looked upon this uprising with abhorrence as another manifestation of anarchy produced by republican doctrines; but, when the Turkish government retaliated by murdering the Patriarch of the Greek Church in Constantinople and by massacring the whole population of numberless Greek villages and towns beyond Greece proper, then Christian Europe, under the leadership of liberal thinkers, began to espouse the Greek cause as that of Christendom against Islam, and of civilization, however crude, against barbarism.

In 1824, the Turks planned, with the help of Egypt, to conduct a vigorous campaign to regain what they had lost; and, hence, in that critical year, the Greeks needed all the moral and material aid that the outside world could render.

All Europe and America were alive to the impending crisis. From various liberal groups in Europe came much needed

financial aid; and from Russia and England came individual leaders to help the Greeks, among whom conspicuously was the English poet, Lord Byron, who died at Missolonghi; while, in the United States, as elsewhere, huge mass-meetings were held, thousands of speeches were made, and resolutions without number were passed in the hope that they might inspire the Greeks to victory.

Among all the speeches that were then made, none was so brilliant, none was so daring, and none was so overwhelming as that of Henry Clay, delivered in the House of Representatives on January 20, 1824, in support of a measure calling for an appropriation to send a commissioner to Greece, to inquire into her condition and to express to her the full sympathy of the American people.

This measure was presented to the House by Daniel Webster, who supported it in an eloquent speech that set forth the whole history of Greece, and denounced the unholy "Holy Alliance" of European sovereigns whose purpose it was to crush liberty wherever it might raise its head in Europe or America. It was the duty of the United States, he said, to express its sympathy for peoples everywhere who were rising to assert their freedom; and then, in the most effective way, he urged upon the American people their duty to give a deep and real significance to the declaration of the English statesman, Canning, when he said that he would "call in the new world to redress the balance of the old."

This speech by Webster is said to have touched Clay deeply. With all the enthusiasm of his generous nature, he rushed to give it his support, and coupled with it a resolution stating that the American people "would not see without serious inquietude any forcible interposition of the allied powers of Europe in behalf of Spain, to reduce to their former subjection those parts of America which have proclaimed and established

for themselves, respectively, independent governments, and which have been solemnly recognized by the United States."

The debates that followed the introduction of this added resolution were most bitter, being "vivified by the flings and taunts of John Randolph." Several speeches were made declaring that such a measure would inevitably bring us into dangerous foreign complications; and then Clay, thoroughly irritated, broke forth in his famous speech, denouncing the Holy Alliance as an intrigue to overthrow the free institutions of America, and asserting that his colleagues were low and debased sycophants if they would not express their sympathy for Greece. With overpowering invective, he dared them to go home to face the indignation of their constituents, if they had not the courage to uphold their convictions.

Never before had Congress listened to such bold defiance or to such an unconcealed effort on the part of any one to dragoon its members into doing their duty. Even by Clay's friends, his speech was pronounced to be "most imprudent," especially in view of his approaching campaign for the presidency; and Schurz, his biographer, states that all "ambitious statesmen gifted with oratorical temperaments may study it with profit to observe some things which it is well to avoid."

Both Clay and Webster sensed the growing opposition in Congress to the measures that they had proposed, and accordingly they did not press them to a vote; but the speeches that both had made in their behalf were translated into all the languages of Europe and there they created a profound and lasting impression. In Greece, particularly, they were hailed with expressions of delight; and throughout the next four years of the most barbarous warfare, they served to animate the revolting Greek patriots with renewed zeal in their struggle to be free.

Henry Clay: On the Greek Revolution

January 20, 1824

Mr. Chairman: The resolution proposed provides the means to defray the expense of a mission, whenever the President, who knows, or ought to know, the disposition of all the European powers, Turkish or Christian, shall deem it proper to send one. The proposition on your table is no proposition for aid, nor for recognition, nor for interference, nor for war.

It has been said that the proposed measure will be a departure from our uniform policy with respect to foreign nations—that it will provoke the ire of the Holy Alliance—and will in effect be a repetition of their offence, by an unwarrantable interference with the domestic concerns of other powers.

If gentlemen are afraid to act rashly on such a subject, suppose, Mr. Chairman, that we draw an humble petition addressed to their majesties, asking them that of their condescension they would allow us to express something on the subject. How, sir, shall it begin? "We, the Representatives of the free people of the United States of America, humbly approach the Thrones of your Imperial and Royal Majesties, and supplicate that of your Imperial and Royal clemency"—I will not go through the disgusting recital; my lips have not yet learned the sycophantic language of a degraded slave.

Are we so low, so base, so despicable, that we may not express our horror, articulate our detestation, of the most brutal and atrocious war that ever stained earth, or shocked high heaven, with the ferocious deeds of a brutal soldiery, set on by the clergy and followers of a fanatical and inimical religion, rioting in excess of blood and butchery, at the mere details of which the heart sickens? If the great mass of Christendom can look coolly and calmly on, while all this is

perpetrated on a Christian people, in their own vicinity, in their very presence, let us, at least, show that, in this distant extremity, there is still some sensibility and sympathy for Christian wrongs and sufferings; that there are still feelings which can kindle into indignation at the oppression of a people endeared to us by every ancient recollection and every modern tie.

But, sir, it is not first and chiefly for Greece that I wish to see this measure adopted. It will give her but little aid, and that aid purely of a moral kind. It is, indeed, soothing and solacing, in distress, to hear the accents of a friendly voice. We knew this as a people. But, sir, it is principally and mainly for America herself, for the credit and character of our common country, that I hope to see this resolution pass; it is for our own unsullied name that I feel.

What appearance, sir, on the page of history, would a record like this make: "In the month of January, in the year of our Lord and Savior 1824, while all European Christendom beheld, with cold, unfeeling apathy, the unexampled wrongs and inexpressible misery of Christian Greece, a proposition was made in the Congress of the United States—almost the sole, the last repository of human hope and of human freedom, the representatives of a nation capable of bringing into the field a million of bayonets—while the freemen of that nation were spontaneously expressing its deep-toned feeling, its fervent prayer, for Grecian success; while the whole continent was rising, by one simultaneous motion, solemnly and anxiously supplicating the aid of heaven to spare Greece, and to invigorate her arms: while temples and senate-houses were all resounding with one burst of generous sympathy; in the year of our Lord and Savior—that Savior alike of Christian Greece and of us—a proposition was offered in the American Congress to send a

messenger to Greece, to inquire into her state and condition, with an expression of our good wishes and our sympathies—and it was rejected!"

Go home, if you dare—go home, if you can—to your constituents, and tell them that you voted it down! Meet, if you dare, the appalling countenances of those who sent you here, and tell them that you shrank from the declarations of your own sentiments; that, you cannot tell how, but that some unknown dread, some indescribable apprehension, some indefinable danger, affrighted you; that the specters of scimiters, and crowns, and crescents, gleamed before you, and alarmed you; and that you suppressed all the noble feelings prompted by religion, by liberality, by national independence, and by humanity! I cannot bring myself to believe that such will be the feelings of the majority of this House. But for myself, though every friend of the measure should desert it, and I be left to stand alone, with the gentleman from Massachusetts, I would give to the resolution the poor sanction of my unqualified approbation.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE PERIOD OF CLAY'S PRE-EMINENCE—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Josiah Quincy: *On the New Army Bill* (1813)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* (1827) III, 5-48; Edmund Quincy's *Life of Josiah Quincy*.
2. Henry Clay: *On the New Army Bill* (1813)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* III, 49-76; Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) II, 264-273; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 205-215.
3. William Pinkney: *In Defense of John Hodges* (1815)—See Snyder's *Great Speeches by Great Lawyers* (1881) 35-46.
4. Henry Clay: *The Emancipation of South America* (1818)—See *Life and Speeches of H. Clay* (Phila. 1853) I, 79-109; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) V, 46-59; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) II, 676-686; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) IX, 76-86; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) IV, 30-39; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) X, 133-138.

5. Henry Clay: *The Seminole War* (1819)—See Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* III, 93-127; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 273-286; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* IV, 26-30.
6. James Tallmadge: *Prohibition of Slavery in Missouri* (1819)—See Appletons' *Debates of Congress* (1867) VI, 350-356.
7. Rufus King: *On the Missouri Question* (1820)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 44-51; Johnston and Woodburn V, 33-62.
8. William Pinkney: *On the Missouri Question* (1820)—See Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 114-129; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) IV, 1603-1612; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* VIII, 332-337.
9. Daniel Webster: *On the Greek Revolution* (1824)—See *Works of Webster* (1853) III, 60-93; Williston's *Eloq. of U. S.* III, 378-416.
10. Henry Clay: *On the Greek Revolution* (1824)—See *Speeches of Clay* (1853) I, 185-193; Depew's *Library of Oratory* V, 80-84.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* McMaster's *History of People of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Calhoun, John C.—See biographies by Jenkins, Von Holst, Pinckney, and Hunt.
Clay, Henry—See biographies by Colton, Schurz, Hart, and T. H. Clay.
Jackson, Andrew—See biographies by Bassett, Parton, and G. W. Johnson.
Quincy, Josiah—See biography by Edmund Quincy.
Randolph, John—See biographies by Garland, Adams, and Bruce.
Webster, Daniel—See biographies by Curtis, Lodge, McMaster, and Ogg.

For biographical sketches of Tallmadge, Taylor, King, and Pinkney, see Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of American Biography.* For Pinkney, see also Sparks's *American Biography.*

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Clay's *Speech on the New Army Bill*

I. What internal evidence is there that Clay was familiar with: (1) Milton's *Paradise Lost,* II, line 628; (2) *Revelations,* Chap. 13?
II. Who were: (1) Edmund Burke; (2) the Pitts; (3) the DeWitts; (4) Truxton; (5) Josiah Quincy?

III. What were: (1) the movements that had begun in South America; (2) the Essex Kennel; (3) the certificates of 1796; (4) the *Constitution* and the *Guierriere;* (5) the disputed rights of American seamen?

IV. What implied reference does Clay make to: (1) the battle of the *Leopard* and the *Chesapeake;* (2) the diplomacy of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney; (3) Stephen Decatur?

V. What justification was there: (1) for the Federalist position that Jefferson and Madison were "incapable of being kicked into a war"; (2) for anyone's referring to Napoleon as "an infidel"; (3) for Clay's statement that Jefferson rescued the Constitution; (4) for Clay's prediction that the peace treaty would be signed at Quebec or Halifax?

On Clay's *Speech on the Greek Revolution*

I. What is the meaning of Clay's expressions: (1) "sycophantic language"; (2) "moral aid"; (3) "temples and senate-houses"; (4) "specters of crescents"?

II. Who was the messenger whom Clay and Webster intended to send to Greece?

III. What were: (1) our uniform policy in Jan., 1824, toward foreign nations; (2) the Holy Alliance; (3) the offense in 1823 of the Holy Alliance; (4) the atrocities committed in the Greek War for Independence?—See *Encyclopaedia Britannica.*

IV. What justification had Clay: (1) for speaking of the Mohammedan religion as "fanatical"; (2) for saying that the great mass of Christendom looked coolly and calmly on Turkish atrocities; (3) for saying that ancient recollections should endear us to the modern Greeks; (4) for saying that America, in 1824, was almost the sole repository of human hope and freedom?

Dictionary Studies from Henry Clay

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. avidity 2. committee of the whole 3. contingency 4. gorgons 5. hydras 6. incumbent 7. ineffable 8. innuendo 9. junto 10. malignant 11. oblivion 12. propitiate 13. pusillanimous 14. repository 15. resuscitated 16. sensibility 17. unessayed 18. vituperation

1. approbation 2. butchery 3. Christendom 4. clemency 5. inimical 6. solacing 7. sycophantic 8. unsullied

CHAPTER VI

DANIEL WEBSTER

Orators and Oratory of the Period of Webster's Pre-eminence

Daniel Webster was a member of the Great Triumvirate of American statesmen and orators whose prominence in the councils of the nation began with the period of the War of 1812 and extended down through the agitation over the Clay Compromise Measures of 1850.

Like Clay and Calhoun, Webster sometimes stood out as the foremost member of the Triumvirate, and at other times assumed a secondary position. To Clay belongs the first period of pre-eminence among the Triumvirs during the decade beginning with the War of 1812. Then follows the period of pre-eminence belonging to Webster beginning with the year 1818 and ending with the great climax of Webster's career in 1830. If any period of pre-eminence can be assigned to Calhoun, that period occurred in the year 1833, or possibly in the year 1850, but it might be more accurate to say that all three members of the Triumvirate were equally conspicuous in the decade of the thirties and in the period of the great compromise of 1850.

There can be no question, however, that the years between 1818 and 1830 should be designated as the period of Webster's pre-eminence; for, in those years, Webster had no peer as an orator before the court; he had no peer as a platform orator on commemorative occasions of great historical significance; and, though he at first met Clay as a rival in the field

of parliamentary oratory, he at last outshone Clay, and every other parliamentary orator of America, in this third field of oratorical achievement.

That this period was, without doubt, the age of Webster's pre-eminence is clearly shown by the series of unparalleled triumphs in oratory secured by him in all the various fields of his oratorical activity. In 1818, for example, he won an unparalleled triumph by his eloquence before the bench in his speech on the *Dartmouth College Case* in the Federal Supreme Court. In 1820, and in 1825, and again in 1826, he won unparalleled triumphs in commemorative platform oratory by his eloquence in the *Plymouth Oration,* in the *First Bunker Hill Address,* and in his *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson.* And then, in 1830, he won two other great and unparalleled triumphs, first in the Senate, and then in jury oratory, by his sublime eloquence in his *Reply to Hayne,* and in his memorable address to the jury in the noted *White Murder Case.*

That Webster was supremely great in his own time as an advocate before the courts was in no sense due to the absence of able competition, but due rather to his own great talents; for many advocates had acquired great fame in the courts. Webster, himself, speaks of Jeremiah Mason of New Hampshire as perhaps the greatest lawyer he had to meet in the early days of his career and one whose legal acumen fell little short of that of Chief Justice John Marshall. But if Webster were compared only with Jeremiah Mason, his eminence would not be assured. Great advocates with whom he may be compared and over whom he was acknowledged to be superior were William Pinkney of Maryland and William Wirt of Virginia, the one, Attorney-General in Madison's cabinet, and the other, Attorney-General in the cabinet of Monroe. As constitutional lawyers, these men stood at the head of their profession; and,

as jury orators, William Wirt had won permanent fame in the prosecution of Aaron Burr in 1807; while William Pinkney had won a reputation almost as brilliant in his defense of John Hodges accused of treason in 1815 for surrendering British captives after the battle of Bladensburg, Maryland, in the War of 1812, on the ground that it was necessary in order to save the town from pillage.

In platform oratory, also, Webster won pre-eminence, not through lack of competition, but through his remarkable talent; for, in this field, also, he was compared with one of America's foremost orators—a man but slightly younger than he, a man who gave practically all his effort to attaining eminence in this field, and a man who spoke during the decade of the twenties on very similar, and sometimes identical, occasions with those on which Webster spoke. This man was Edward Everett, an associate and admirer of Webster, who won early fame for his *Oration on the First Settlement of New England* in 1824; for his *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson* in 1826; for his *Oration on the Bunker Hill Monument* in 1834; for his *Eulogy of Lafayette* and his address on *The Battle of Concord* in 1835; and then, in later life, for his lecture on *Washington* delivered many times between 1856 and 1859, and for his address on the *Dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg* in 1863. To be compared with such a man, as a platform orator, was no slight test, and yet such was the test that Webster met to establish his pre-eminence in this field of eloquence.

As a political orator in the period between 1818 and 1830, Webster was active only in the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention of 1820, where he clearly outshone all his local competitors, and in Congress from the year 1824 onward. He did not meet, therefore, in that body either James Tallmadge,

or John W. Taylor, or Rufus King of New York, or William Pinkney of Maryland, at the time of the debates on the Missouri question in 1819 and 1820; but he did measure his talents with those of John Randolph, Henry Clay, and Robert Y. Hayne, the foremost orators in Congress during the sessions when he was at the national capital. Among all these great orators, however, only Clay in the early part of their association, and Hayne in the latter, could be compared with him; and as the comparison, even with these powerful political orators, is made, Webster is found to be pre-eminent.

In all forms of oratory, therefore, that graced this period, Webster out-distanced his rivals; and, during these years, he established the reputation that makes him the foremost orator of America.

The Life of Daniel Webster

Daniel Webster was the greatest of American orators, a man whose name has come to be synonymous with eloquence the world over, and whose fame rivals that of Demosthenes, of Cicero, of Chrysostom, of Bossuet, of Chatham, and of Burke, the most brilliant speakers of all ages in the world's history.

Webster is not known merely as an orator, however, but also as a lawyer and as a statesman of the first magnitude, the great expounder of the Constitution, and the foremost defender of the Union, during the period known as the Great Golden Age of American Oratory, when the nation was still in its infancy and was threatened, time and again, with disruption at the hands of those who advocated the doctrines of State sovereignty, nullification, and secession.

With Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster stands forth as one of the great trio of statesmen and orators, whose counsels guided the nation for a period of forty years

through the turmoil and strife of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Webster was born at Salisbury, New Hampshire, in 1782, and received his education at Phillips Exeter Academy and at Dartmouth College, where he graduated in 1801. After studying law in Boston under the guidance of Christopher Gore, he began the practice of his profession in the country town of Boscawen, New Hampshire, but soon removed to Portsmouth, where he encountered at the bar the most eminent jury-lawyer in New England, Jeremiah Mason, who, by his example taught Webster how to use his great talents as a pleader in the courts.

By slow degrees, Webster acquired a reputation for being one of the foremost lawyers in the State, and, in consequence, was sent to Congress in 1813 as a representative from New Hampshire. There, he took a prominent part in the debates on the tariff and on the establishment of the United States Bank, but, after four years of service, retired to private life to practice his profession in Boston. Almost immediately he was recognized as one of the great leaders of the bar in New England, acquiring great prominence by his most skillful and eloquent *Defense of the Kennistons* in 1817, and, in the following year, acquiring a reputation that was nation-wide from his celebrated plea in the *Dartmouth College Case* before the Supreme Court of the United States.

From this time forward, until the end of his life, Webster's services as a platform orator, and as an advocate before the courts, were everywhere in demand. In 1820, he was chosen to deliver the address at Plymouth on *The First Settlement of New England,* and there produced such a profound impression that George Ticknor, the eminent scholar, has said: "I was never so excited by public speaking before in my life. Three or four times I thought my temples would burst with the gush

of blood. . . . . When I came out, I was almost afraid to come near to him. It seemed to me as if he was like the mount that might not be touched and that burned with fire. I was beside myself, and I am so still."

By many persons, the *Plymouth Oration* is regarded as the finest of Webster's platform utterances; but, five years later, in 1825, it was followed by an even more brilliant oration in the same vein, delivered before countless thousands on the slope of Bunker Hill, when Webster laid the corner-stone of the great monument.

Once more, however, Webster was to reach the high-water mark of his platform eloquence, when, in the following year, on the fiftieth anniversary of the date when the Declaration of Independence was signed, he delivered, in Faneuil Hall, his commemorative address on *Adams and Jefferson.* In this speech those famous passages occur that give a description of the historic scene in Independence Hall when John Adams made his plea for the Declaration; and so realistic was Webster's imagined speech, attributed to Adams, that many eminent scholars were at first convinced that Webster had unearthed an authentic copy of the long-lost speech, which had, in fact, perished with its utterance.

These three great platform addresses at Plymouth, at Bunker Hill, and at Faneuil Hall, were never excelled by Webster in his later life; yet four other famous orations deserve to be mentioned as specimens of his grandest eloquence in the field of occasional oratory, where he is said to have had no peer, and where, indeed, no other could even approach him. His *Eulogy of Washington* in 1832; his *Second Bunker Hill Oration* in 1843; his speech on *The Landing at Plymouth* before the New England Society of New York in 1848; and his speech on the *Laying of the Corner-Stone of the Capitol* in

1851, all display the master hand of one of the world's greatest orators.

After Webster had come to be recognized as America's foremost platform orator, he then began to build up an even greater reputation as a deliberative orator in Congress. For seven years, between 1817 and 1824, Webster had devoted himself to hard labor at the bar; but, at the end of this interval, he appeared again in Washington, this time as a Representative from Massachusetts in the lower House. There he immediately rose to distinction by an eloquent speech on the *Greek Revolution,* which was circulated throughout South America and translated into all the languages of Europe. As a Whig statesman, Webster worked hand in hand with Clay; and, giving support to Clay's project of sympathy and cooperation with South America, he delivered in 1826 another notable address on the *Panama Mission.*

Webster's real eminence as a statesman came, however, during his long career in the Senate, which extended without interruption from 1827 to 1841, and again from 1845 down to the time of the fateful Clay Compromise Measures in 1850. The only breaks that occurred in this distinguished service as a United States Senator were occasioned by his presence in the cabinet of Harrison and Tyler, as Secretary-of-State from 1841 to 1843, and by his acceptance of the same position under Fillmore from 1850 till his death in 1852.

The great climax of Webster's oratory was reached, when, in the year 1830, he delivered before the Senate, his *Reply to Hayne,* the most eloquent parliamentary address of modern times, which has lived for generations in the minds and hearts of American youth, inspiring them with patriotic devotion for the Union, that carried them unfalteringly through the great battles of the Civil War.

Then, in that same year, by a strange coincidence, Webster delivered before a jury at Salem, Massachusetts, in the *White Murder Case,* a plea that never since has been equaled for its tremendous eloquence—a plea that has placed him at the very head of the American bar in criminal prosecution.

Webster's *Reply to Hayne* was followed, three years later, during the nullification crisis in 1833, by another remarkable speech on the same general subject, less popular in style, but more statesmanlike in character, entitled *The Constitution not a Compact.* This speech, delivered in debate against John C. Calhoun, at the very height of his power, established beyond a doubt that Webster was a match for his mightiest opponent, not merely in eloquence, but also in his keen powers of logical analysis.

Throughout Webster's career as a Senator, he was, with Clay, a leader of the minority party, and many of his ablest speeches were directed against the despotic power wielded by Andrew Jackson in the presidency. One of his most thrilling utterances, however, during this period of opposition, was his speech on *The Presidential Protest,* in 1834, occasioned by the removal of the public deposits from the United States Bank. While condemning the arbitrary course of the President, Webster recalled a paragraph composed by himself fourteen years before, as he stood on the citadel of Quebec surveying the panorama of the St. Lawrence, and exclaimed that it was against such an arbitrary power that the colonists had fought—"a power which has dotted the face of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts; whose morning drumbeat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, encircles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

It would have been well for Webster if he had retired from

public life at the end of his first period of brilliant service in the Senate; for, at that time, the growing agitation for the abolition of slavery began to assume such proportions that it seriously threatened to engulf the old party leaders. Webster, personally, was an opponent of the slave-system, and, as a statesman, he protested against its extension into the territories acquired after the Mexican War; but, when he was obliged to choose between slavery or a dissolution of the Union, he unflinchingly chose the lesser evil, slavery; and true to the great principles for which he had always stood, he came out forcibly, at last, in condemnation of the Abolition movement and in support of the Union at all hazards.

In this spirit, he spoke, when he came to the assistance of Clay, in one of his most memorable addresses before the Senate, on the Seventh of March, 1850, during the fierce debates on the Clay Compromise Measures, which saved the Union from impending dissolution and postponed for a decade the terrible bloodshed of the Civil War.

This speech, however, lost for him the support of many of his friends in the North, and crushed forever his long-cherished ambition for the presidency. Henceforth, he appeared like a fallen archangel, disowned in Boston, and looked upon with distrust and suspicion throughout the Union that he had tried to save. In vain, his friends strove to obtain for him the nomination of the Whig party for the presidency in 1852; but, long before, his great heart had been broken by the ingratitude of the public; and the heroic leader whose voice had thrilled the nation in days gone by, withdrew from the scenes of his triumphs, and went down to Marshfield, down to his old home by the sea, to die.

Seldom, in any country, or in any age, has the world beheld a grander figure than that of Webster even in the days of

his decline. People stood in awe at his commanding presence, and spoke of him with reverence as the "god-like Daniel." When in England, he was pointed out on the street, with the expression—"There goes a king." And Sydney Smith, who saw him there, exclaimed, "Good heavens! he is a small cathedral in himself." He was, indeed, what the people called him, a "giant"; and Carlyle, writing to Emerson, said: "He is a magnificent specimen, a parliamentary Hercules, whom one would feel inclined to back at first sight against the world." No one could fail to note with admiration his huge build, his massive head, his "precipice of brow," his jet black eyes "glowing like anthracite coal," his aquiline nose, and his firm "leonine mouth." All of these qualities contributed to give him an overwhelming personality, even before he uttered a word.

Unlike many another orator, Webster rose to fame by slow degrees, and by laborious effort to overcome his early tendency toward bombast. Yet, from this struggle, he emerged as master of a perfect style, that could sway multitudes by its simplicity and its grandeur. Many of his speeches, in fact, have been deemed worthy of a permanent place in English literature.

In the three branches of eloquence, on the platform, in the courts, and before the Senate, Webster stood for years without a peer. In platform eloquence, one critic has said, that it would be hard to find anything superior to Webster's *Oration at Plymouth;* in the oratory of the courts, there is nothing finer than Webster's speech on the murder of Captain White; and, in parliamentary oratory, no speech ever excelled in splendor the great *Reply to Hayne.*

Throughout all of Webster's oratory, there runs one great absorbing theme; namely, the perpetuation of the Constitution

and the preservation of the Union; and, hence, when Webster is spoken of as one of the world's greatest orators, he must also be remembered as the foremost "Expounder of the Constitution," and the "Greatest Defender of the Union" in the days, when both were threatened, before the Civil War.

Historical Setting of Webster's Speech in the Dartmouth College Case

Webster's speech before the Supreme Court at Washington in the *Dartmouth College Case* gave him his first national reputation as a constitutional lawyer and brilliant advocate, second only in his professional attainments to the veteran statesman and orator, William Pinkney, who had been Attorney-General of the United States during the administration of Madison.

The occasion for this speech was the hearing of a cause that had already assumed tremendous significance both in law and in politics, long before it was heard at Washington, during its progress through the lower courts in the State of New Hampshire.

Briefly stated, the case was this. After considerable dissension between the board of trustees and the president of Dartmouth College, the president was removed; and, appealing to the legislature, he obtained from that body a complete reorganization of the college under a new board of trustees, thereby virtually annulling the old charter under which the college had been administered from colonial times, by taking it over from private control and making it in reality a State institution. The old board of trustees refused to recognize this act of the legislature; and, electing a new president, they instituted a suit to recover possession of the college seal and other college property. Their cause was ably upheld in the State courts by

the most eminent counsel, including Jeremiah Mason, Judge Smith, and Daniel Webster; but, receiving there an adverse decision, it was appealed to the Supreme Court at Washington on only one of many points involved; namely, whether the act of the legislature, in annulling rights granted under the old charter, was not a violation of the Federal Constitution, inasmuch as it impaired the obligation of a contract.

When Webster appeared before the bar of the Supreme Court, he believed that this one point upon which the whole case turned had almost no weight, and he therefore determined to re-enforce it by wholly irrelevant appeals to political prejudice that might be skillfully interwoven into his argument. It so happened that his clients, the old board of trustees, all belonged to the Federalist party, while his opponents and the State legislature, were all Jeffersonian-Republicans; and, hence, it would be easy for him to make it appear that the assault upon the old college was merely another attempt to foist upon America, through its educational institutions, the revolutionary doctrines of the French Jacobins. Such an appeal he knew would rouse in the Chief Justice, John Marshall, all the bitter memories of his long struggle to maintain Federalist doctrines from the bench against the violent attacks that had been made upon them by the followers of Jefferson.

In a speech that consumed five hours, Webster, accordingly argued at length the constitutional point, but here and there and everywhere he insisted upon dragging into the case this wholly irrelevant matter, until at last the great Chief Justice seemed "roused like an old war-horse at the sound of the trumpet." Once more the joy of battle glowed in his breast, as he heard that "Jacobinism was raising its sacrilegious hand against the temples of learning, against the friends of order and good government," and slowly he determined once more to grasp anew his weapons, and "with all the force of his in-

domitable will to raise yet another constitutional barrier across the path of his ancient enemies."

Great as was the effect, however, produced by Webster in the body of his speech, it was yet to be excelled by his magnificent peroration, in which he appealed to personal sympathy in an attempt to express his unutterable love for his old Alma Mater. His concluding paragraphs required but two or three minutes for their delivery; yet, during that time, an eye-witness has told us, that "Chief Justice Marshall, with his tall and gaunt figure, bent over, as if to catch the slightest whisper, the deep furrows of his cheek expanding with emotion and his eyes suffusing with tears; Mr. Justice Washington, at his side, with his small emaciated frame, and countenance more like marble than I ever saw on any other human being, leaned forward with an eager, troubled look; and the remainder of the Court, at the two extremities, pressed, as it were, to a single point; while the audience below wrapped themselves round in closer folds beneath the bench to catch each look and every movement of the speaker's face." Never again was there to be heard in the Supreme Court so eloquent an appeal, in which reason was suffused so tactfully with passion and emotion, until, three quarters of a century later, Joseph H. Choate appeared in the same way to argue the *Income Tax Cases* in 1895.

By this great speech, Webster won to his side the Chief Justice; and, with him, soon he had won a majority of the Court, in a decision that ever since has given rise to fierce contention among the leaders of the bar. Whatever were the merits of Webster's constitutional arguments, however, his speech on this occasion in behalf of his Alma Mater will always be remembered as one of the greatest landmarks in the history of American forensic oratory.

Daniel Webster: In the Dartmouth College Case
March, 1818

The case before the court is not of ordinary importance, nor of everyday occurrence. It affects not this college only, but every college, and all the literary institutions of the country. They have flourished hitherto, and have become in a high degree respectable and useful to the community. They have all a common principle of existence, the inviolability of their charters. It will be a dangerous, a most dangerous experiment to hold these institutions subject to the rise and fall of popular parties, and the fluctuations of political opinions. If the franchise may be taken away, or impaired, the property also may be taken away, or its use perverted. Benefactors will have no certainty of effecting the object of their bounty; and learned men will be deterred from devoting themselves to the service of such institutions, from the precarious title of their offices. Colleges and halls will be deserted by all better spirits, and become a theater for the contentions of politics. Party and faction will be cherished in the places consecrated to piety and learning.

When the court in North Carolina declared the law of the State, which repealed a grant to its university, unconstitutional and void, the legislature had the candor and the wisdom to repeal the law. This example, so honorable to the State which exhibited it, is most fit to be followed on this occasion. And there is good reason to hope that a State which has hitherto been so much distinguished for temperate counsels, cautious legislation, and regard to law, will not fail to adopt a course which will accord with her highest and best interests, and in no small degree elevate her reputation.

It was for many and obvious reasons most anxiously desired

that the question of the power of the legislature over this charter should have been finally decided in the State court. An earnest hope was entertained that the judges of the court might have reviewed the case in a light favorable to the rights of the trustees. That hope has failed. It is here that those rights are now to be maintained, or they are prostrated forever.

This, sir, is my case. It is the case not merely of that humble institution, it is the case of every college in the land. It is more. It is the case of every eleemosynary institution throughout our country—of all those great charities formed by the piety of our ancestors, to alleviate human misery, and scatter blessings along the pathway of life. It is more! It is, in some sense, the case of every man among us who has property, of which he may be stripped, for the question is simply this: Shall our State legislatures be allowed to take that which is not their own, to turn it from its original use, and to apply it to such ends or purposes as they in their discretion shall see fit?

Sir, you may destroy this little institution; it is weak; it is in your hands! I know it is one of the lesser lights on the literary horizon of our country. You may put it out. But, if you do so, you must carry through your work! You must extinguish, one after another, all those greater lights of science, which, for more than a century, have thrown their radiance over our land!

It is, sir, as I have said, a small college, and yet there are those who love it.

Sir, I know not how others may feel, but for myself, when I see my Alma Mater surrounded, like Caesar, in the senate house, by those who are reiterating stab after stab, I would not, for this right hand, have her turn to me, and say, *et tu quoque, mi fili!* And thou too, my son.

Historical Setting of Webster's Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson

The *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson,* delivered by Webster in Faneuil Hall, Boston, on August 2, 1826, is one of the great trinity of commemorative and historical addresses that gave Webster his pre-eminent place among modern platform orators of the special occasion.

Not so great as the *Plymouth Oration* or the *First Bunker Hill Oration* that preceded it, this oration contains, nevertheless, passages which, in themselves, are probably more famous and more admired than any single passages in the other two, greater orations.

Little more than a year after Webster made his world-renowned address at the laying of the corner-stone of Bunker Hill Monument, he was called upon again to be the orator-of-the-day in Boston on the occasion set to commemorate the services of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, who, strangely enough, had died on the same day, the Fourth of July, just fifty years after their great achievement in giving to the country the Declaration of Independence.

The day for these memorial exercises was fixed as August 2, 1826, the exact date of the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration, and the place was to be Faneuil Hall, the old "Cradle of Liberty."

When the day arrived, an eye-witness, Mr. Ticknor, says, that the weather was fine; and, as a result, an immense concourse came to hear Webster speak. "It was the first time that Faneuil Hall had been draped in mourning. The scene was very solemn, though the light of day was not excluded. Settees had been placed over the whole area of the hall; the large platform was occupied by many of the most distinguished

men in New England, and, as it was intended that everything should be conducted with as much quietness as possible, the doors were closed when the procession had entered, and every part of the hall and galleries was filled.

"This, however," said Mr. Ticknor, "was a mistake in the arrangements; the crowd on the outside, thinking that some space must still be left within, became uneasy, and finally grew so tumultuous and noisy that the solemnities were interrupted. The police in vain attempted to restore order, and it seemed as if confusion would prevail.

"Mr. Webster perceived, however, that there was but one thing to be done—he advanced to the front of the stage, and said, in a voice easily heard above the noise of tumult without and of alarm within, *'Let those doors be opened!'* The power and authority of his manner were irresistible—the doors were opened, though with difficulty, from the pressure of the crowd on the outside; but, after the first rush, everything was quiet, and the order during the rest of the performance was perfect."

To Mr. Ticknor we are indebted, not only for a description of this incident, but also for a description of the orator-of-the-day. "Mr. Webster," he said, "spoke in an orator's gown, and wore small clothes. He was in the perfection of his manly beauty and strength; his form filled out to its finest proportions, and his bearing, as he stood before the vast multitude, that of absolute dignity and power. His manuscript lay on a small table near him, but I think he did not once refer to it. His manner of speaking was deliberate and commanding. When he came to the passage on eloquence, and to the words, 'It is action, noble, sublime, godlike action,' he stamped his foot repeatedly on the stage, his form seemed to dilate, and he stood as that whole audience saw and felt, the personification of what he so perfectly described."

In this oration Webster inserted a description of the scene

in the Continental Congress during the arguments *pro* and *con* on the adoption of the Declaration of Independence; and then, with the vividness of Livy, put into the mouths of the principal actors speeches that have since been considered by many as authentic utterances from behind the closed doors of that Revolutionary assemblage.

Many and many a school boy has declaimed Webster's *Supposed Speech of John Adams,* with its famous words—"Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish," etc.—and has thought that this whole speech was the real utterance of the Revolutionary patriot; but Webster, himself, has said that "he had no authority whatsoever for the sentiments of the speech, excepting Mr. Adams's general character, and a letter he had written to his wife, which had frequently been published."

To the end of his life, however, Mr. Webster was never free from inquiries concerning this matter; and once, when President Fillmore was pressing the familiar question, Webster added to his customary reply: "I will tell you what is not generally known. I wrote that speech one morning before breakfast, in my library; and, when it was finished, my paper was wet with my tears."

Out of the travail of his soul, therefore, out of the depths of his great learning, and out of the use of his brilliant and vivid historical imagination, Daniel Webster created the various fragments of this masterpiece of commemorative oratory, fragments that, in every respect, were equal to the well-imagined eloquence of Livy, or to the great speeches put by Shakespeare into the mouths of Brutus and Antony—fragments that will live forever along with John Adams's version of James Otis's speech *Against Writs of Assistance* and William Wirt's version of Patrick Henry's *Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death,* as true interpretations of the genius of American oratory in the period of the Revolution.

Webster's Description of the Eloquence of John Adams from His Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson August 2, 1826

The eloquence of Mr. Adams resembled his general character, and formed, indeed, a part of it. It was bold, manly, and energetic; and such the crisis required.

When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake and strong passions excited, nothing is valuable in speech further than it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness are the qualities that produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion.

Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire after it,—they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbreaking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments, and studied contrivances of speech shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible.

Even genius, itself, then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then, patriotism is eloquent; then, self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming

from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man *onward,* right ONWARD to his object,—this, this is ELOQUENCE; or rather it is something greater and higher than all eloquence—it is ACTION—NOBLE, SUBLIME, GODLIKE ACTION.

Historical Setting of the Actual Speech by John Adams for the Declaration of Independence

On the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Daniel Webster said of this event in his eulogy commemorating the death of Adams and Jefferson: "Surely, never, never were men called to a more important political deliberation. If we contemplate it from the point where they then stood, no question could be more full of interest; if we look at it now, and judge of its importance by its effects, it appears in still greater magnitude. Let us then bring before us the assembly, which was about to decide a question thus big with the fate of empire. Let us open their doors and look in on their deliberations. Let us survey their anxious and care-worn countenances; or let us hear the firm-toned voices of this band of patriots."

On the first day of July, 1776, at ten o'clock in the morning, Congress assembled in the East Room of Independence Hall to take from the table the momentous resolution, that, three weeks before, Richard Henry Lee had brought up for consideration. The assembly was, at first, thrown into deep gloom by the reading of a letter from Washington, stating the utter inadequacy of his force to repel the expected attack of the British on New York. Then, with doors closed, in committee of the whole, the assembly proceeded solemnly to the orders of the day.

For a time, the delegates sat in silence, no one venturing to broach the great subject. In such a gathering, "the froth of declamation was heard with the most sovereign contempt," and every argument for and against the measure had long since been exhausted. It was a waste of time, John Adams thought, to expend more energy in debating the matter; but the newly arrived delegates from New Jersey refused to vote until they had heard in the halls of Congress the arguments with which they had already been made familiar before they came.

Richard Henry Lee, the original mover of the resolution, was absent at the sick-bed of his wife at home; and Jefferson, the author of the Declaration, sat there helpless to defend it in debate. In this situation, all eyes turned toward John Adams, who had seconded the resolution, and who, Jefferson said, was "our Colossus on the floor." Members began to say: "Let the gentlemen be gratified,"— and then several exclaimed: "Come, Mr. Adams, you have had the subject longer at heart than any of us; and you must recapitulate the arguments."

Being thus pressed by his associates, Adams finally yielded to their demands; and, years afterwards, he said of the occasion: "I was somewhat confused at this personal application to me, and would have been very glad to be excused; but, as no other person rose, after some time, I said, 'This is the first time in my life when I seriously wished for the genius and eloquence of the celebrated orators of Athens and Rome: called in this unexpected and unprepared manner to exhibit all the arguments in favor of a measure the most important, in my judgment, that had ever been discussed in civil or political society, I had no art or oratory to exhibit, and could produce nothing but simple reason and plain common sense. I felt myself oppressed by the weight of the subject, and I believed that if Demosthenes or Cicero had ever been called

to deliberate on so great a question, neither would have relied on his own talents without a supplication to Minerva, and a sacrifice to Mercury or the God of Eloquence.' All this, to be sure, was but a flourish, and not, as I conceive, a very bright exordium; but I felt awkwardly."

The actual words spoken by Adams on this occasion were never recorded; yet, to-day, we have a speech composed by Webster, to be included in his *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson,* which so faithfully transmits to us the spirit, and the thought, and even the expressions of Adams as found in his letters, that, at first, it passed, even among critics and scholars, as the genuine work of the early patriot himself.

For two days following the speech by John Adams, Congress continued to deliberate on the resolution; and then, when a vote could be taken, all the colonies were found to be in favor of the Declaration, except South Carolina and Pennsylvania, with New York not voting. On a second ballot, however, the decision was made unanimous.

The next day, John Adams wrote in a letter to his wife: "Yesterday, the greatest question was decided which was ever debated in America, and a greater, perhaps, never was, or will be, decided among men. The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward for evermore.

"You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil and blood and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the gloom, I can see the

rays of ravishing light and glory; I can see that the end is worth all the means; and that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even though we should rue it, which, I trust in God, we shall not."

By the simple, straightforward speech of John Adams, which Webster has described as involving more than "mere eloquence,"—a speech that came, as Webster said, "like the outbreaking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force,"—a speech that displayed "no graces taught in the schools, no costly ornaments, no studied contrivances" of rhetoric, but "action," rather, "noble, sublime, godlike action,"—Congress, at last was persuaded to promulgate to the world the immortal document, written by Jefferson, announcing the determination of America to be thereafter a free, and independent sovereign state among the nations of the earth.

Webster's Supposed Speech of John Adams in His Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson August 2, 1826

Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote. It is true, indeed, that in the beginning, we aimed not at independence. But there's a Divinity which shapes our ends. The injustice of England has driven us to arms; and, blinded to her own interest for our good, she has obstinately persisted, till independence is now within our grasp. We have but to reach forth for it, and it is ours.

Why then should we defer the declaration? Is any man so weak as now to hope for a reconciliation with England, which shall leave either safety to the country and its liberties, or safety to his own life, and his own honor? Are not you, sir, who sit in that chair, is not our venerable colleague near you,

are you not both already the proscribed and predestined objects of punishment and of vengeance? Cut off from all hope of royal clemency, what are you, what can you be, while the power of England remains, but outlaws?

If we postpone independence, do we mean to carry on, or to give up the war? Do we mean to submit to the measures of Parliament, Boston port bill and all? Do we mean to submit, and consent that we ourselves shall be ground to powder, and our country and its rights trodden down into the dust?

I know we do not mean to submit. We never shall submit. The war then must go on. We must fight it through. And if the war must go on, why put off longer the Declaration of Independence? That measure will strengthen us. It will give us character abroad. If we fail, it can be no worse for us. But we shall not fail. The cause will raise up armies, the cause will create navies. The people, the people, if we are true to them, will carry us, and will carry themselves, gloriously, through this struggle.

Sir, the declaration will inspire the people with increased courage. Read this declaration at the head of the army; every sword will be drawn from its scabbard, and the solemn vow uttered to maintain it, or to perish on the bed of honor. Publish it from the pulpit; religion will approve it, and the love of religious liberty will cling round it, resolved to stand with it, or fall with it. Send it to the public halls; proclaim it there; let them hear it who heard the first roar of the enemy's cannon; let them see it who saw their brothers and their sons fall on the field of Bunker Hill, and in the streets of Lexington and Concord, and the very walls will cry out in its support.

Sir, I know the uncertainty of human affairs, but I see, I see clearly through this day's business. You and I, indeed, may rue it. We may not live to the time, when this declaration

shall be made good. We may die, die, colonists; die, slaves; die, it may be, ignominously, and on the scaffold. Be it so. Be it so. But if it be the pleasure of heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready, at the appointed hour of sacrifice, come when that hour may. But while I do live, let me have a country, and that a free country.

Whatever may be our fate, be assured, be assured, that this declaration will stand. It may cost treasure, and it may cost blood; but it will stand, and it will richly compensate for both. Through the thick gloom of the present, I see the brightness of the future, as the sun in heaven. We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day. When we are in our graves, our children will honor it. They will celebrate it, with thanksgiving, with festivity, with bonfires, and illuminations. On its annual return they will shed tears, copious, gushing tears, not of subjection and slavery, not of agony and distress, but of exultation, of gratitude, and of joy.

Sir, before God, I believe the hour has come. My judgment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it; and I leave off, as I began, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment; independence, *now;* and INDEPENDENCE FOREVER!

Historical Setting of Webster's Reply to Hayne

As a political orator, Webster came to the very zenith of his powers in the famous *Reply to Hayne,* which critics have declared to be the greatest oration ever heard in America, taking

its place beside the world's most celebrated classics, and rivalling in its grandeur even that renowned masterpiece of Demosthenes, his *Oration on the Crown.*

This speech was delivered in the Senate at the culmination of a long and protracted debate that originated in the introduction by Senator Foote from Connecticut of certain resolutions of inquiry concerning the sale of western lands. The debate on these resolutions soon departed from the original subject matter, in consequence of a labored attack made by Senator Benton of Missouri on the policies of New England, when he charged that region with hostility to the development of the West by opposing the easy sale of government lands in order to keep a cheap supply of labor at home in the factories. To this he added that "the West must still look to the solid phalanx of the South for succor"; and, in response to this call, Senator Hayne of South Carolina dashed into the fray to cement this new alliance and to convert the contest into a great battle between the North and the South.

Since 1824, the mind of Hayne had been filled with rancor toward the North for its policy of high protective tariffs which were ruinous to South Carolina, and which were driving that State, under the leadership of Calhoun, to announce the revolutionary doctrine of nullification. To gain support in the West for this cherished doctrine of South Carolina, Hayne followed the lead of Benton, and delivered against New England a still more vigorous attack on its policy toward the West. By this time Webster had become aroused, and indignantly he replied in a great speech that crushed forever Hayne's contention that New England was following a selfish policy in respect to the sale of western lands.

This was the first exchange of blows between the two great leaders of the North and South, but immediately there followed

a more terrific contest that fanned into flame all the fierce passions of sectional hatred and sectional prejudice. Hayne was thoroughly mortified and chagrined by the crushing nature of Webster's first reply; and, accordingly, he rose in the Senate, placing his hand upon his heart, and said that he had something there he wished to get rid of. Webster, so said Hayne, had "discharged his fire in the face of the Senate," and Hayne therefore demanded "an opportunity to return the shot."

It so happened that Webster had requested a postponement of further debate for a week in order that he might keep an engagement to argue an important case in the Supreme Court; but, when he heard such language from his adversary, he determined to let all other considerations yield. "Then it was," said a Southern statesman, "that Mr. Webster's person seemed to become taller and bigger. His chest expanded and his eyeballs dilated. Folding his arms in a composed, firm, and most expressive manner, he exclaimed, 'Let the discussion proceed. I am ready. I am ready *now* to receive the gentleman's fire.' "

With the consent of Webster, therefore, Hayne once more opened his attack, with the avowed purpose of annihilating forever Webster's influence in the Senate, first by charging him with cowardice, then by calling into question the patriotism of New England and its devotion to the Union, and finally,—after broaching every issue on which the North and South had differed since the organization of the government, —by setting forth in the most attractive form all the arguments of South Carolina for the revolutionary doctrine of nullification.

After two days of the most eloquent speaking, Hayne brought his long argument to a close with a declaration in favor of liberty first and union afterwards. The hour was then

late, and Webster secured the floor for a reply, but an adjournment forced him to put off his remarks until the following day.

Those who sympathized with Hayne were jubilant over his success, believing that his adversary would find it impossible to match his eloquence or meet his overwhelming attack. This feeling, moreover, was not confined to Southern men; for many Northerners were apprehensive also that Webster, great as he was, had at last met an opponent too powerful for him to overthrow.

That evening, Edward Everett conversed freely with Webster at his lodgings concerning the reply he was to make, and when he asked the great man if he had taken notes on Hayne's speech, Webster took from his vest pocket a piece of paper about as big as the palm of his hand, and said, "Yes, I have it all; that is his speech." Though others were afraid, Webster seemed not at all disturbed; for, as he said afterward, his whole life had been a preparation for this great event. Several years before, in fact, he had prepared an elaborate argument to meet just such a speech; and, in his own words, he said, "If Hayne had tried to make a speech to fit my notes, he could not have hit it better."

On the morning of the next day, Webster consulted Senator Bell of New Hampshire as to whether he should speak out fully his constitutional opinion; and Bell replied: "It is a critical moment; and it is time, it is high time that the people of this country should know what this Constitution is." "Then," said Webster, "by the blessing of heaven, they shall learn this day, before the sun goes down, what I understand it to be."

March says, in his *Reminiscences of Congress,* that that day, the 26th of January, 1830, would thereafter be "forever mem-

orable in Senatorial annals. There never was," said he, "an occasion of so much excitement. To witness this great intellectual contest, multitudes of strangers had, for two or three days previous, been rushing into the city, and the hotels overflowed. As early as nine o'clock of this morning, crowds poured into the Capitol in hot haste; at twelve o'clock, the hour of meeting, the Senate Chamber,—its galleries, floors, and even lobbies,—was filled to its utmost capacity. The very stairways were dark with men who hung on to one another like bees in a swarm. The House of Representatives was early deserted. An adjournment would have hardly made it emptier. Members all rushed to hear Mr. Webster, and no call of the House, or other parliamentary proceedings could compel them back. . . . . The anxiety to hear the speech was so intense, irrepressible, and universal, that no sooner had the Vice President assumed the chair, than a motion was made and unanimously carried, to postpone the ordinary preliminaries of Senatorial action, and to take up immediately the consideration of the resolution."

Then it was that Webster, seemingly unconscious of the great throng about him, rose to make his reply. Every heart was aflutter with excitement, every face showed the strain of anxious expectation, yet Webster alone seemed unruffled. Calmly he surveyed the scene, and then in one of the most splendid exordiums of the English language, he called for a reading of the resolution. By such deliberate procedure, he allayed all fear as to his mastery of the situation; and when the monotonous reading of the resolution was finished, he then launched into his great reply with the purpose of leaving no point of his adversary untouched, whether it affected only himself personally or that section of the country which he represented, whether it was a matter of law or a matter of

policy, whether it demanded an intimate knowledge of ancient and modern history or a complete familiarity with all the allusions that might be drawn from classical literature; on every point he intended to parry the brilliant thrusts of his opponent, and then on the vital issue, that of nullification, to overwhelm forever in the public mind this insidious doctrine that struck at the very life of the Union.

Hour after hour, Webster spoke, until the late afternoon, crushing at first, beneath the most dignified sarcasm, every attack that had been made against his own character and motives; then vindicating with such exalted eloquence the patriotism of New England that he brought tears into the eyes of his listeners; and thus, having removed from the controversy all irrelevant matter, he proceeded to prove by the most elaborate argument that he himself was standing solidly on the ground of the Constitution, while his adversary was promulgating doctrines that led to a disruption of the Union. Long before he had finished, he had brought consternation and alarm into the ranks of his opponents, where hitherto there had been only joy and exultation at their expected triumph; but, in his concluding paragraphs, he reached even more exalted heights of eloquence, and trampling down all opposition, he turned the defeat of his adversaries into the most overwhelming disaster.

For generations afterwards, Americans everywhere remembered his sublime eloquence, when he held up for them in vivid contrast, the doctrine of delusion and folly embodied in the words *"Liberty first and Union afterwards,"* compared with that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, *"Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!"* No such tremendous eloquence had ever been heard in America before, and no such eloquence was ever to be heard again. These words were to be committed to memory by every rising

generation of American youth; and, thirty years afterward, they were chanted by thousands who willingly gave up their lives on the battlefields of the great Civil War for the preservation of the Union—for liberty as they conceived it—for liberty *and* union, now and forever, one and inseparable.

Daniel Webster: The Reply to Hayne
January 26, 1830

I. The Exordium

Mr. President—When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and before we float further on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may be at least able to conjecture where we now are. I ask for the reading of the resolution before the Senate.

[The Secretary then read the resolution.]

We have thus heard, sir, what the resolution is, which is actually before us for consideration; and it will readily occur to every one that it is almost the only subject about which something has not been said in the speech, running through two days, by which the Senate has been entertained by the gentleman from South Carolina. Every topic in the wide range of our public affairs, whether past or present—every thing general or local, whether belonging to national politics or party politics—seems to have attracted more or less of the honorable member's attention, save only the resolution before us. He has spoken of every thing but the public lands. They have escaped his notice. To that subject, in all his excursions, he has not paid even the cold respect of a passing glance.

II. Webster's Personal Vindication

When this debate, sir, was to be resumed, on Thursday morning, it so happened that it would have been convenient for me to be elsewhere. The honorable member, however, did not incline to put off the discussion to another day. He had a shot, he said, to return, and he wished to discharge it. The shot, sir, which he thus kindly informed us was coming, that we might stand out of the way, or prepare ourselves to fall by it and die with decency, has now been received. Under all advantages, and with expectation awakened by the tone which preceded it, it has been discharged, and has spent its force. It may become me to say no more of its effect, than that, if nobody is found, after all, either killed or wounded, it is not the first time in the history of human affairs, that the vigor and success of the war have not quite come up to the lofty and sounding phrase of the manifesto.

The gentleman, sir, in declining to postpone the debate, told the Senate, with the emphasis of his hand upon his heart, that there was something rankling *here,* which he wished to relieve. [Mr. Hayne rose, and disclaimed having used the word *rankling.*] It would not, Mr. President, be safe for the honorable member to appeal to those around him, upon the question whether he did in fact make use of that word. But he may have been unconscious of it. At any rate, it is enough that he disclaims it. But still, with or without the use of that particular word, he had yet something *here,* he said, of which he wished to rid himself by an immediate reply. In this respect, sir, I have a great advantage over the honorable gentleman. There is nothing *here,* sir, which gives me the slightest uneasiness; neither fear nor anger, nor that which is sometimes more troublesome than either, the consciousness of

having been in the wrong. There is nothing, either originating *here*, or now received *here* by the gentleman's shot. Nothing originating here, for I had not the slighest feeling of unkindness toward the honorable member. Some passages, it is true, had occurred since our acquaintance in this body, which I could have wished might have been otherwise; but I had used philosophy and forgotten them.

I paid the honorable member the attention of listening with respect to his first speech; and when he sat down, though surprised, and I must even say astonished, at some of his opinions, nothing was farther from my intention than to commence any personal warfare. Through the whole of the few remarks I made in answer, I avoided studiously and carefully every thing which I thought possible to be construed into disrespect. And, sir, while there is thus nothing originating *here* which I have wished at any time, or now wish, to discharge, I must repeat, also, that nothing has been received *here* which *rankles,* or in any way gives me annoyance.

I will not accuse the honorable member of violating the rules of civilized war; I will not say that he poisoned his arrows. But whether his shafts were, or were not, dipped in that which would have caused rankling if they had reached their destination, there was not, as it happened, quite strength enough in the bow to bring them to their mark. If he wishes now to gather up those shafts, he must look for them elsewhere; they will not be found fixed and quivering in the object at which they were aimed.

The honorable member complained that I slept on his speech. I must have slept on it, or not slept at all. The moment the honorable member sat down, his friend from Missouri rose, and, with much honeyed commendation of the speech, suggested that the impressions which it had produced

were too charming and delightful to be disturbed by other sentiments or other sounds, and proposed that the Senate should adjourn. Would it have been quite amiable in me, sir, to interrupt this excellent good feeling? Must I not have been absolutely malicious, if I could have thrust myself forward, to destroy sensations thus pleasing? Was it not much better and kinder, both to sleep upon them myself, and to allow others also the pleasure of sleeping upon them? But if it be meant, by sleeping upon his speech, that I took time to prepare a reply to it, it is quite a mistake. Owing to other engagements, I could not employ even the interval between the adjournment of the Senate and its meeting the next morning, in attention to the subject of this debate. Nevertheless, sir, the mere matter of fact is undoubtedly true. I did sleep on the gentleman's speech, and slept soundly. And I slept equally well on his speech of yesterday, to which I am now replying. It is quite possible that in this respect, also, I possess some advantage over the honorable member, attributable doubtless to a cooler temperament on my part; for, in truth, I slept upon his speeches remarkably well.

But the gentleman inquires why HE was made the object of such a reply. Why was *he* singled out? If an attack has been made upon the East, he, he assures us, did not begin it; it was made by the gentleman from Missouri. Sir, I answered the gentleman's speech, because I happened to hear it; and because, also, I chose to give an answer to that speech, which, if unanswered, I thought most likely to produce injurious impressions. I did not stop to inquire who was the original drawer of the bill. I found a responsible endorser before me, and it was my purpose to hold him liable, and to bring him to his just responsibility without delay.

But, sir, this interrogatory of the honorable member was

only introductory to another. He proceeded to ask me whether I had turned upon him in this debate, from the consciousness that I should find an overmatch, if I ventured on a contest with his friend from Missouri. If, sir, the honorable member, *modestiae gratia,* had chosen thus to defer to his friend, and to pay him compliments, without intentional disparagement to others, it would have been quite according to the friendly courtesies of debate, and not at all ungrateful to my own feelings. I am not one of those, sir, who esteem any tribute of regard, whether light and occasional, or more serious and deliberate, which may be bestowed on others, as so much unjustly withholden from themselves.

But the tone and the manner of the gentleman's question forbid me thus to interpret it. I am not at liberty to consider it as nothing more than a civility to his friend. It had an air of taunt and disparagement, something of the loftiness of asserted superiority, which does not allow me to pass it over without notice. It was put as a question for me to answer, and so put as if it were difficult for me to answer whether I deemed the member from Missouri an overmatch for myself in debate here. It seems to me, sir, that this is extraordinary language, and an extraordinary tone, for the discussions of this body.

Matches and overmatches! Those terms are more applicable elsewhere than here, and fitter for other assemblies than this. Sir, the gentleman seems to forget where and what we are. This is a Senate, a Senate of equals, of men of individual honor and personal character, and of absolute independence. We know no masters, we acknowledge no dictators. This is a hall for mutual consultation and discussion; not an arena for the exhibition of champions.

I offer myself, sir, as a match for no man; I throw the chal-

lenge of debate at no man's feet. But then, sir, since the honorable member has put the question in a manner that calls for an answer, I will give him an answer; and I tell him that holding myself to be the humblest of the members here, I yet know nothing in the arm of his friend from Missouri, either alone or when aided by the arm of his friend from South Carolina, that need deter even me from espousing whatever opinions I may choose to espouse, from debating whenever I may choose to debate, or from speaking whatever I may see fit to say, on the floor of the Senate.

Sir, when uttered as a matter of commendation or compliment, I should dissent from nothing which the honorable member might say of his friend. Still less do I put forth any pretensions of my own. But when put to me as a matter of taunt, I throw it back, and say to the gentleman, that he could possibly say nothing less likely than such comparison to wound my pride of personal character.

The anger of his tones rescued the remark from intentional irony, which otherwise, probably, would have been its general acceptation. But, sir, if it be imagined by this mutual quotation and commendation; if it be supposed that, by casting the characters of the drama, assigning to each his part, to one the attack, to another the cry of onset; or if it be thought that, by loud and empty vaunt of anticipated victory, any laurels are to be won here; if it be imagined, especially, that any, or all, of these things will shake any purpose of mine, I can tell the honorable member, once for all, that he is greatly mistaken, and that he is dealing with one of whose temper and character he has yet much to learn.

Sir, I shall not allow myself on this occasion, I hope on no occasion, to be betrayed into any loss of temper; but if provoked, as I trust I never shall be, into crimination and recrimi-

nation, the honorable member may, perhaps, find that in that contest, there will be blows to take as well as blows to give; that others can state comparisons as significant, at least, as his own, and that his impunity may possibly demand of him whatever powers of taunt and sarcasm he may possess. I commend him to a prudent husbandry of his resources.

III. Webster's Vindication of the Recent Administration of John Quincy Adams

[Note: Here Webster replies to the taunt by Hayne that he is impelled to attack the proposed new combination of West and South under Benton of Missouri and Hayne of South Carolina from peevishness over the success of Andrew Jackson in breaking up the combination of East and West under Adams as President and Clay as Secretary-of-State. The election of Jackson in 1828 was due largely to an old charge of "bargain and corruption" against Clay, to the effect that he threw his votes against Jackson in the election of 1824 in return for a promise of the position of Secretary-of-State in Adams's cabinet. The "murdered coalition," therefore, was that of Adams and Clay, the "Puritan and the Blackleg," according to John Randolph, and the corrupted leaders of East and West against the people, according to Andrew Jackson.]

The gentleman asks if I were led or frighted into this debate by the specter of the coalition. The coalition! Ay, "the murdered coalition!" "Was it the ghost of the murdered coalition," he exclaims, "which haunted the member from Massachusetts, and which, like the ghost of Banquo, would never down?" "The murdered coalition!" Sir, this charge of a coalition, in reference to the late administration, is not

original with the honorable member. It did not spring up in the Senate. Whether, as a fact, or as an argument, or as an embellishment, it is all borrowed. He adopts it, indeed, from a very low origin, and a still lower present condition. It is one of the thousand calumnies with which the press teemed during an excited political canvass. It was a charge of which there was not only no proof or probability, but which was, in itself, wholly impossible to be true. No man of common information ever believed a syllable of it. Yet it was of that class of falsehoods which, by continued repetition through all the organs of detraction and abuse, are capable of misleading those who are already far misled, and of further fanning passion already kindling into flame. Doubtless it served its day, and in a greater or less degree, the end designed by it. Having done that, it has sunk into the general mass of stale and loathed calumnies. It is the very cast-off slough of a polluted and shameless press. Incapable of further mischief, it lies in the sewer, lifeless and despised. It is not now, sir, in the power of the honorable member to give it dignity and decency, by attempting to elevate it, and to introduce it into the Senate. He cannot change it from what it is—an object of general disgust and scorn. On the contrary, the contact, if he choose to touch it, is more likely to drag him down, down to the place where it lies itself.

But, sir, the honorable member was not, for other reasons, entirely happy in his allusion to the story of Banquo's murder and Banquo's ghost. It was not, I think, the friends, but the enemies of the murdered Banquo, at whose bidding his spirit would not down. The honorable gentleman is fresh in his reading of the English classics, and can put me right if I am wrong; but, according to my poor recollection, it was at those who had begun with caresses, and ended with foul and treach-

erous murder, that the gory locks were shaken. The ghost of Banquo, like that of Hamlet, was an honest ghost. It disturbed no innocent man. It knew where its appearance would strike terror, and who would cry out, A ghost! It made itself visible in the right quarter, and compelled the guilty and the conscience-smitten, and none others, to start with,

"Prithee, see there! behold!—look! lo!
If I stand here, I saw him!"

Their eyeballs were seared—was it not so, sir?—who had thought to shield themselves by concealing their own hand, and laying the imputation of the crime on a low and hireling agency in wickedness; who had vainly attempted to stifle the workings of their own coward consciences; by ejaculating through white lips and chattering teeth, "Thou canst not say I did it!" I have misread the great poet, if it was those who had in no way partaken in the deed of the death, who either found that they were, or feared that they should be, pushed from their stools by the ghost of the slain, or who cried out to a specter created by their own fears, and their own remorse, "Avaunt! and quit our sight!"

There is another particular, sir, in which the honorable member's quick perception of resemblance might, I should think, have seen something in the story of Banquo, making it not altogether a subject of the most pleasant contemplation. Those who murdered Banquo, what did they win by it? Substantial good? Permanent power? Or disappointment, rather, and sore mortification—dust and ashes—the common fate of vaulting ambition overleaping itself? Did not evenhanded justice, ere long, commend the poisoned chalice to their own lips? Did they not soon find that for another they had "filed their mind"?—that their ambition, though apparently for the moment successful, had but put a barren scepter in their grasp? Ay, sir,—

"A barren scepter in their gripe,
Thence to be wrenched by an unlineal hand,
No son of theirs succeeding."

Sir, I need pursue the allusion no further. I leave the honorable gentleman to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased by the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied, though the parallel should be entirely completed, I had almost said I am satisfied also—but *that* I shall think of. Yes, sir, I will think of that.

IV. Webster's Vindication of New England

Mr. President, the honorable gentleman, in carrying his warfare, such as it is, into New England, all along professes to be acting on the defensive. He chooses to consider me as having assailed South Carolina, and insists that he comes forth only as her champion, and in her defense. Sir, I do not admit that I made any attack whatever on South Carolina. Nothing like it. The honorable member, in his first speech, expressed opinions, in regard to revenue and some other topics, which I heard with both pain and surprise. I told the gentleman, I was aware that such sentiments were entertained *out* of the government, but had not expected to find them advanced in it; that I knew there were persons in the South who speak of our Union with indifference or doubt, taking pains to magnify its evils, and to say nothing of its benefits; that the honorable member, himself, I was sure, could never be one of these; and I regretted the expression of such opinions as he had avowed, because I thought their obvious tendency was to encourage feelings of disrespect to the Union, and to impair its strength. This, sir, is the sum and substance of all I said on the subject. And this constitutes the attack which called on the chivalry of the gentleman, in his own opinion,

to harry us with such a foray among the party pamphlets and party proceedings in Massachusetts! If he means that I spoke with dissatisfaction or disrespect of the ebullitions of individuals in South Carolina, it is true. But if he means that I assailed the character of the State, her honor, or her patriotism, that I reflected on her history or her conduct, he has not the slightest grounds for any such assumption.

Let me observe that the eulogium pronounced by the honorable gentleman on the character of the State of South Carolina, for her Revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honorable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor; I partake in the pride of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all, the Laurenses, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Sumters, the Marions,—Americans all, whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits.

In their day and generation, they served and honored the country, and the whole country, and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him whose honored name the gentleman bears himself—does he suppose me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light in Masschasetts instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, sir,—increased gratification and delight, rather. Sir, I thank God, that if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is said to be able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit which would drag angels down.

When I shall be found, sir, in my place here in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at the public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the limits of my own State and neighborhood; when I refuse for any such cause, or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or if I see an uncommon endowment of heaven—if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue in any son of the South—and if moved by local prejudice, or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections; let me indulge in refreshing remembrances of the past; let me remind you that, in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution, hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exist, alienation, and distrust, are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

Mr. President, I shall enter upon no encomium of Massachusetts; she needs none. There she is. Behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for Independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State from New England to Georgia, and there they will lie forever. And, sir, where American liberty raised

its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood, and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint shall succeed in separating it from the Union, by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain, over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the profoundest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.

V. Webster's Statement of the Issues in the Debate

There yet remains to be performed, Mr. President, by far the most grave and important duty which I feel to be devolved upon me by this occasion. It is to state, and to defend, what I conceive to be the true principles of the Constitution under which we are here assembled, I might well have desired that so weighty a task should have fallen into other and abler hands. I could have wished that it should have been executed by those whose character and experience give weight and influence to their opinions, such as cannot possibly belong to mine. But, sir, I have met the occasion, not sought it; and I shall proceed to state my own sentiments, without challenging for them any particular regard, with studied plainness, and as much precision as possible.

I understand the honorable gentleman from South Carolina to maintain that it is a right of the State Legislature to interfere whenever, in their judgment, this government transcends its constitutional limits, and to arrest the operation of its laws.

I understand him to maintain this right, as a right existing

under the Constitution, not as a right to overthrow it on the ground of extreme necessity, such as would justify violent revolution.

I understand him to maintain an authority on the part of the States, thus to interfere, for the purpose of correcting the exercise of power by the General Government, of checking it and of compelling it to conform to their opinion of the extent of its powers.

I understand him to maintain, that the ultimate power of judging of the constitutional extent of its own authority is not lodged exclusively in the General Government, or any branch of it; but that, on the contrary, the States may lawfully decide for themselves, and each State for itself, whether, in a given case, the act of the General Government transcends its power.

I understand him to insist, that, if the exigencies of the case, in the opinion of any State government, require it, such State government may, by its own sovereign authority, annul an act of the General Government which it deems plainly and palpably unconstitutional.

This is the sum of what I understand from him to be the South Carolina doctrine, and the doctrine which he maintains. I propose to consider it, and compare it with the Constitution. Allow me to say as a preliminary remark, that I call this the South Carolina doctrine only because the gentleman himself has so denominated it. I do not feel at liberty to say that South Carolina, as a State, has ever advanced these sentiments. I hope she has not, and never may. That a great majority of her people are opposed to the tariff laws, is doubtless true. That a majority, somewhat less than that just mentioned, conscientiously believe these laws unconstitutional, may probably also be true. But that any majority holds to

the right of direct State interference at State discretion, the right of nullifying acts of Congress by acts of State legislation, is more than I know, and what I shall be slow to believe.

VI. The Peroration

Mr. President, I have stated the reasons of my dissent to the doctrines which have been advanced and maintained. I am conscious of having detained you and the Senate much too long. I was drawn into the debate with no previous deliberation, such as is suited to the discussion of so grave and important a subject. But it is a subject of which my heart is full, and I have not been willing to suppress the utterance of its spontaneous sentiments. I cannot even now persuade myself to relinquish it, without expressing once more my deep conviction, that, since it respects nothing less than the union of the States, it is of most vital and essential importance to the public happiness.

I profess, sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influences, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its

benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

While the Union lasts we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original luster, not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured, bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterward"; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heaven, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart,—Liberty *and* Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!

Historical Setting of Webster's Speech in the White Murder Case

Less than six months from the time that Webster delivered his famous *Reply to Hayne,* the most eloquent of all his speeches in the Senate; when, tired out by his labors in Washington, he returned to his home; he was called upon to

give assistance as a special prosecutor in one of New England's most famous murder trials, arising from the mysterious assassination of an aged sea-captain, Joseph White, of Salem, who had been killed while sleeping peacefully in bed under his own roof. Though summoned at the last minute to take part in this trial, by over-night preparation, Webster was able to carry the brunt of the prosecution; and, in closing the case for the State, delivered one of the most well-reasoned arguments, and by far the most eloquent speech, that has ever been addressed to an American jury.

On the morning of April 7, 1830, Captain Joseph White, a retired merchant of great wealth, then eighty-two years old, was found murdered in his bed, with thirteen deep wounds made by a dagger or other such weapon, and with his skull fractured as if he had been struck by a bludgeon on the temple. No trace of the murderer could be found, and robbery was not thought to be the motive, for none of the money or plate in the old sea-captain's mansion had been disturbed.

The quiet old town of Salem was shocked and baffled by this strange and hideous crime, and for many weeks the authorities of the town and State could find no clue to the murderer, though huge rewards were offered, and a most active vigilance committee was appointed. At length, however, a prisoner in the jail at New Bedford, seventy miles away, gave out certain statements that led to the arrest of Richard Crowninshield as the murderer; and later, certain letters demanding blackmail brought about the arrest of a man in Belfast, Maine, who charged Frank and Joseph Knapp, distant relatives of White by marriage, with procuring the murder to get a larger share of the dead man's estate by inheritance, when his will had been destroyed. The sight of this blackmailer being taken into jail led Crowninshield to

commit suicide in his cell, and all these combined events brought from Joseph Knapp a complete confession, which he afterwards retracted.

Such is a brief statement of the case as it came to Webster to argue, when a special session of the Supreme Court was held at Salem in July and August, 1830, to try Frank Knapp as a principal on the charge of murder. In Webster's speech, it was necessary for him to prove that there was a conspiracy to commit this murder; that Crowninshield and the Knapps were parties in this conspiracy; that Frank Knapp knew that the murder was to be committed on the night of the sixth of April; that the murderers were suspicious persons seen on a back street near White's house on the night of the murder; that Crowninshield perpetrated the crime; that Frank Knapp was present in the street below; and that he was there by agreement, to countenance, and to aid the perpetrator.

All this, Webster argued with telling effect upon the jury; but, before entering upon his argument, he conjured up before their minds such a vivid pcture of the crime just as he imagined that it must have been committed with all its gruesome details, that the jurors seemed almost to have witnessed the deed itself. As Henry Cabot Lodge has said in his biography of Webster, this "description of the White murder, and of the ghastly haunting sense of guilt which pursued the assassin, has never been surpassed in dramatic force by any speaker, whether in debate or before a jury." It has, in fact, no parallel in literature, unless it be the famous scene from Shakespeare, when Macbeth, with a guilty conscience, after the murder of Duncan, rushes from the chamber of death crying out to all the world that he had done the deed.

This magnificent description in Webster's opening paragraphs is fully equaled in its eloquence, however, by his sub-

lime peroration in which he calls upon the jury to do their duty, for "a sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent, like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed, or duty violated, is still with us, for our happiness or our misery." No passage is more often quoted, than is this one, by jury-lawyers to-day. No jury can withstand its appeal; and so it was in the instance of its first delivery. By Webster's eloquence, Frank Knapp was sent to the gallows; and the speech that brought this verdict is justly credited with being one of the ablest, as well as one of the grandest, ever delivered to a jury in the annals of the bar.

Daniel Webster: In the White Murder Case
August, 1830

I. Description of the Murder

Gentlemen, this is a most extraordinary case. In some respects it has hardly a precedent anywhere, certainly none in our New England history. This bloody drama exhibited no suddenly excited, ungovernable rage. It was cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was the weighing of money against life; the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood.

An aged man, without an enemy in the world, in his own house and in his own bed, is made the victim of a butcherly murder for mere pay. Truly, here is a new lesson for painters and poets. Whoever shall hereafter draw the portrait of murder, let him not give it the grim visage of Moloch,—the brow knitted by revenge, the face black with settled hate, and the bloodshot eye emitting livid fires of malice. Let him draw rather a decorous, smooth-faced, bloodless demon; a picture

in repose rather than in action; not so much an example of human nature in its depravity and in its paroxysms of crime, as an infernal being, a fiend, in the ordinary display and development of his character.

The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim and on all beneath his roof. A healthful old man to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft but strong embrace. The assassin enters, through the window already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall half lighted by the moon. He winds up the ascent of the stairs and reaches the door of the chamber. He enters and beholds his victim before him. The face of the innocent sleeper is turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon, resting on the gray locks of the aged temples, show him where to strike. The fatal blow is given. Without a struggle or a motion the victim passes from the repose of sleep to the repose of death. The murderer retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes out through it as he came in, and escapes.

He has done the deed. No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him, the secret is his own and it is safe. Ah! Gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the guilty can bestow it and say it is safe. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance, connected with the time and place; a thousand ears catch every whisper; a thousand excited minds intensely dwell on the scene, shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery. Meantime the guilty soul cannot keep its own

secret. It is false to itself. It labors under its guilty possession and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him, and, like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising in his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstance to entangle him, the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed; there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.

II. The Peroration

Gentlemen, your whole concern in this case should be to do your duty, and let consequences take care of themselves. You will receive the law from the court. Your verdict, it is true, may endanger the prisoner's life, but then it is to save other lives. If the prisoner's guilt has been shown and proved beyond all reasonable doubt, you will convict him. If such reasonable doubt of guilt still remains, you will acquit him. You are the judges of the whole case. You owe a duty to the public as well as to the prisoner at the bar. You cannot presume to be wiser than the law. Your duty is a plain, straightforward one. Doubtless we would all judge him in mercy. Toward him as an individual the law inculcates no hostility; but towards him, if proven to be a murderer, the law, and the oaths you have taken, and public justice, demand that you do your duty.

With consciences satisfied with the discharge of duty, no consequences can harm you. There is no evil that we cannot either face or fly from, but the consciousness of duty disregarded. A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed, or duty violated, is still with us, for our happiness or our misery. If we say the darkness shall cover us, in the darkness as in the light our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power nor fly from their presence. They are with us in this life, will be with us at its close; and in that scene of inconceivable solemnity, which lies yet farther onward, we shall still find ourselves surrounded by the consciousness of duty, to pain us wherever it has been violated, and to console us so far as God may have given us grace to perform it.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE PERIOD OF WEBSTER'S PRE-EMINENCE—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Webster: Defense of the *Kennistons* (1817)—See *Works of Webster* (1853) V, 441-461.
2. Webster: *The Dartmouth College Case* (1818)—See *Works of Webster* V, 462-501; for peroration, see Choate's *Eulogy of Webster* (1853) in Brown's *Works of Rufus Choate* (1862) I, 516-517.
3. Webster: *The Plymouth Oration* (1820)—See *Works of Webster* I, 5-50.
4. Webster: *The Greek Revolution* (1824)—See *Works of Webster* III, 60-93; Williston's *Eloquence of U. S.* (1827) III, 378-416.
5. Edward Everett: *First Settlement of New England* (1824)—See Everett's *Orations and Speeches* (1860) I, 45-72.
6. Webster: *The First Bunker Hill Oration* (1825)—See *Works of Webster* I, 55-78; Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) II, 362-369; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) V, 268-292; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921) 492-508.

7. Edward Everett: *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson* (1826)—See Everett's *Orations and Speeches* I, 131-149; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) V, 146-162.
8. Webster: *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson* (1826)—See *Works of Webster* I, 109-148.
9. Robert Y. Hayne: *On the Foote Resolution* (1830)—See Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) II, 457-478; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 233-247; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) III, 1170-1177; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) IX, 3-23.
10. Webster: *Reply to Hayne* (1830)—See *Works of Webster* (1853) III, 270-342; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 370-399; Bradley's *Orations and Arguments* (1894), 185-251; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 248-302; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) V, 171-268; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) V, 2053-2082; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) IX, 38-63; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921) 211-272.
11. Webster: *The White Murder Case* (1830)—See *Works of Webster* VI, 41-105; Moore's *Am. Eloq.* II, 399-421; Shurter's *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* (1906) 65-128; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* 3-47.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Bowers's *Party Battles of the Jackson Period;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* McMaster's *History of People of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Calhoun, John C.—See biographies by Jenkins, Von Holst, Pinckney, and Hunt.
Clay, Henry—See biographies by Colton, Schurz, Hart, and T. H. Clay.
Everett, Edward—See biography by Frothingham.
Hayne, Robert Y.—See biography by Jervey.
Jackson, Andrew—See biographies by Bassett, Parton, and G. W. Johnson.
Webster, Daniel—See biographies by Curtis, Lodge, McMaster, and Ogg.

See also Sears's *History of Oratory* (1895); Higginson's *American Orators and Oratory* (1901); March's *Reminiscences of Congress;* Harvey's *Reminiscences of Congress;* Harvey's *Reminiscences of Webster;* and Rufus Choate's *Eulogy of Webster* (1853) in Brown's *Rufus Choate* (1862) I, 493-558.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Webster's *Speech in the Dartmouth College Case*

I. What internal evidence is there that Webster was familiar with: (1) Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar,* Act III, Scene I; (2) Wirt's version of Henry's *Call to Arms* (1817)?

II. What were: (1) the many and obvious reasons for desiring a settlement in the State courts; (2) the greater lights of science which for more than a century had thrown their radiance over the land?

III. What veiled reference does Webster make to an historic instance of State defiance of the Supreme Court?—See *Fletcher v. Peck* in Bassett's *Short History of U. S.,* 358.

IV. What justification had Webster for calling colleges like Dartmouth eleemosynary institutions?

V. What subtle appeal does Webster make to Marshall's antipathy to French jacobinism?

VI. Did Webster argue for "academic freedom of speech" in the modern sense of the term?

VII. What certainty have benefactors of colleges now that the objects of their bounty will be effected?

VIII. Has the inviolability of charters remained since Marshall's decision a rigid constitutional principle?—See Bassett, 360.

On Webster's *Description of Eloquence*

I. What internal evidence is there that Webster was familiar with *Cicero's De Oratore?*—See Yonge's translation of *Cicero's Orations* IV, 397.

II. What was Webster's definition of a *momentous occasion?*—What have been some historic momentous occasions such as Webster had in mind?—Is there proof that, on such occasions, high intellectual and moral endowments, were necessary to the successful orators?

III. What was Webster's conception of the ultimate goal of eloquence?—How was this goal to be attained?—What is the function of clearness, force, and earnestness?—What kind of force is necessary?—What quality does earnestness add to force?—What kind of clearness is necessary?

IV. How does Webster say that clearness, force, and earnestness can *not* be attained?—What are the necessary elements in the situation to produce eloquence?—What kind of man is necessary?—What kind of subject is necessary?—What kind of occasion is necessary?

V. Does Webster's argument leave untouched occasions when he would concede the value of studies in rhetoric and declamation?—See accounts of his preparation for the *Plymouth Oration,* the *First Bunker Hill*

Oration, and the *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson;* and similar accounts of his preparation for the *Reply to Hayne,* in Curtis's *Life of Webster.*

VI. How does Webster in his argument provide against the charge that he decries all labor and learning as a basis for eloquence?

VII. What is a concise, clear-cut, and comprehensive definition of *eloquence?* —Compare Webster's conception of eloquence with that of Emerson in his two essays on *Eloquence.*—See Emerson's *Society and Solitude,* and *Letters and Social Aims.*

On Webster's *Supposed Speech of John Adams*

I. Is there any internal evidence that Webster's phraseology was influenced by a familiar knowledge of: (1) Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* Act I, Scene II; (2) Adams's version of Otis's *Speech against Writs of Assistance* (1798); (3) Drayton's *Charge to the Grand Jury* (1776); (4) Wirt's version of Henry's *Call to Arms* (1817); (5) Geo. Alex. Otis's translation of Carlo Botta's version of R. H. Lee's *Speech on Independence* (1826)?

II. What two members of the Continental Congress were proscribed?

III. What justification had Webster for describing Samuel Adams as venerable at the age of fifty-four?

On Webster's *Reply to Hayne*

I. Is there any internal evidence that Webster was familiar with: (1) Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* Act I, Scene III; (2) Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* Act III, Scenes I, IV, Act V, Scene I; (3) *Book of Job,* 29:10?

II. Who were: (1) the Laurenses; (2) the Rutledges; (3) the Pinckneys; (4) the Sumters; (5) the Marions; (6) the man whose honored name Hayne bore; (7) the representatives of Massachusetts and South Carolina who stood hand in hand around the administration of Washington?

III. What was the attitude of Benton toward Jackson?—What therefore was the meaning of Webster's taunt in quoting the words, "A barren scepter in their gripe, thence to be wrenched by an unlineal hand, no son of theirs succeeding."

IV. What was the nature of the party pamphlets and party proceedings in Massachusetts with which Hayne taunted Webster?

On Webster's *Speech in the White Murder Case*

I. What internal evidence is there that Webster was familiar with: (1) *Matthew,* 27:3-5; (2) Milton's *Paradise Lost,* I, lines 392-405; Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* Act I, Scene 7, Act II, Scenes I, II, Act V, Scenes I, V; (3) *Book of Psalms,* 139-7-12?

II. Compare, for effectiveness, Webster's plea for the performance of duty, with Portia's plea for the rendering of mercy.—See Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice,* Act IV, Scene I.

Dictionary Studies from Daniel Webster

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. affect 2. alleviate 3. bounty 4. candor 5. effect 6. eleemosynary 7. faction 8. franchise

1. affected 2. compass 3. declamation 4. endowment 5. momentous 6. spontaneous 7. volcanic

1. character 2. ignominiously 3. proscribed 4. sacrifice 5. stake

1. acceptation 2. alienation 3. latitude 4. avaunt 5. belligerent 6. benign 7. chalice 8. chivalry 9. coalition 10. construed 11. copious 12. crimination 13. denominated 14. detraction 15. discipline 16. ebullitions 17. embellishment 18. encomium 19. espouse 20. excursions 21. exigencies 22. foray 23. gangrened 24. haunted 25. hawk 26. homage 27. husbandry 28. impunity 29. irony 30. loathed 31. manifesto 32. misled 33. mutual 34. organs 35. palpably 36. passages 37. prithee 38. salutary 39. shafts 40. slough 41. taunt 42. teemed 43. transcends 44. unlineal 45. vaunt

1. decorous 2. grace 3. inculcate 4. inconceivable 5. livid 6. paroxysms 7. precedent 8. oaths 9. omnipresent 10. visage

CHAPTER VII

JOHN C. CALHOUN

Orators and Oratory Contemporary with Calhoun and the Epochs of Calhoun's Pre-Eminence

John C. Calhoun of South Carolina was the third member of the Great Triumvirate of statesmen and orators whose joint leadership in the councils of the nation extended from the War of 1812 down to the Clay Compromise of 1850.

As has been stated, each member of this Triumvirate enjoyed a period of pre-eminence even among his associates in this group. Clay's period of pre-eminence was in the decade beginning with the War of 1812; Webster's, in the years between 1818 and 1830; and Calhoun's in the year 1833, with possibly a second great epoch in 1850.

From 1811 to 1817, Calhoun was conspicuous as an orator in the national House of Representatives; and again he was conspicuous in the same way from 1833 to 1844, and from 1845 to 1850 in the United States Senate.

There never was a time in Calhoun's long career as a political orator, but that he was actively engaged either as an opponent, or as an associate, of the foremost political spokesmen of the country; for, during the War of 1812, he, under Clay, measured swords against John Randolph in advocacy of the war against England; and, after the peace, he met Webster on equal terms in the debates on the tariff and on the establishment of the United States Bank.

Then, in 1833, Calhoun succeeded Hayne as the great

advocate of nullification in the Senate; and, in this year, he found himself pitted against Webster, with Clay assuming the task of peace-maker between the two.

Thereafter, for four years, during the many debates on Jackson's conduct in destroying the United States Bank, these three intellectual giants, all working together in opposition to President Jackson, led attack after attack on the administration, whose chief support came from the Missouri orator and statesman, Thomas H. Benton.

From 1836 onward, Calhoun was the foremost defender of slavery under the Constitution; while John Quincy Adams, the ex-President, then a member of the House of Representatives, was the chief opponent of slavery and of the "gag rules" imposed upon the lower House to prevent discussions of slavery.

But in this period, also, another brilliant Southern orator, Seargent S. Prentiss of Mississippi, came to Washington for one session of Congress to share the glamor that had always belonged either to Hayne or to Calhoun as the outstanding representatives of Southern eloquence.

With the outbreak of the Mexican War, however, Calhoun found himself, strangely enough, associated with Webster, and then with Thomas Corwin of Ohio, both Northerners, in opposition to the war policies of the Polk administration, and pitted against the powerful Northern spokesman of a Southern President, Lewis Cass of Michigan.

Then, finally, in 1850, Calhoun, Webster, and Clay, all found themselves compelled to meet a whole new school of orators from a younger generation, when, during the debates on the Clay Compromise Measures of that year, they faced such new leaders of the anti-slavery group as William H. Seward of New York, and Salmon P. Chase of Ohio; while, at the same time, Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois was just reach-

ing out for the leadership of the Democratic party to replace the sectional leaders of North and South.

When we say, therefore, that Calhoun was one of the foremost political orators of his time, we make this statement, not as an empty claim, but with due consideration for the merits of many other distinguished speakers, including not only Webster and Clay, but John Randolph, Robert Y. Hayne, Thomas H. Benton, John Quincy Adams, Seargent S. Prentiss, Thomas Corwin, Lewis Cass, William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, and Stephen A. Douglas.

Starting out as a strong centralizing statesman, with Clay as his leader, Calhoun changed in 1820, at the time of the Missouri Compromise, to a decentralizing statesman, advocating, after the tariffs of 1824 and 1828, the doctrine of nullification, and then, later, in 1850, the doctrine of secession, to maintain the power of the slave States within the Union.

The key to Calhoun's statesmanship, therefore, in his mature years, is to be found in his advocacy of State rights through nullification and afterwards through the more extreme threat of secession. As one of these doctrines merged into the other, then the years in which he pressed each to the furthest limits, namely, the years 1833 and 1850 should be regarded as the great outstanding years in his career as a statesman and political orator.

The Life of John C. Calhoun

John C. Calhoun of South Carolina is known in history as the "Great Nullifier." He was born in Abbeville district, South Carolina, in the year 1782. His early education, he obtained at home; but later he was sent to Yale, where he graduated with the highest honors in 1802, having so deeply impressed President Dwight with his ability as a controversi-

alist, that this great teacher predicted for him a career in public life which might culminate in his being chosen President of the United States.

After studying law at Charleston and again in Litchfield, Connecticut, he was admitted to the bar in 1807, and soon became a member of the South Carolina legislature. He first appeared in Congress in 1811, and there displayed the greatest eloquence in urging measures that led to the War of 1812. From 1817 to 1825, Calhoun was Secretary-of-War in the cabinet of President Monroe, and, thereafter, for seven years, he presided over the deliberations of the Senate as Vice President of the United States, during the administration of John Quincy Adams, and throughout the greater part of the first administration of Andrew Jackson.

In 1816, he had been an ardent advocate of a powerful government, supporting then all the measures for internal improvement and for a high protective tariff; but, in 1820, he became thoroughly frightened, during the debates on the Missouri Compromise, for fear that a too highly centralized government might eventually destroy the system of slavery in the South; and, consequently, his whole political philosophy underwent a radical change.

He was violently opposed to the high protective tariff in 1824, and even more violently opposed to the tariff of 1828, which came to be known as the "Tariff of Abominations." While still occupying the station of Vice President of the United States, he drew up document after document expressing for South Carolina its protest against this ruinous tariff and voicing for its people the doctrine of nullification; that is, that when any State considered laws of Congress unconstitutional, it might declare such laws to be null and void within its borders.

In pursuance of this doctrine, South Carolina declared the tariff measure of 1832 null and void, and prepared to make good its position by armed resistance. To champion this doctrine, Calhoun resigned his position as Vice President, and secured an election to the United States Senate, where, in 1833, he confronted Daniel Webster in debate, and delivered against the *Force Bill* of the Federal government one of his most remarkable and most powerful speeches.

The crisis that had come upon the government at this time was alleviated by Clay's second great compromise; and, thereafter, Calhoun joined hands frequently with Clay and Webster to combat the so-called tyranny of Andrew Jackson in the presidency. Only in their fierce opposition to Jackson, however, could these three giants labor together harmoniously; for Calhoun had become the greatest champion of State rights and of a decentralized government, while Clay and Webster were the great champions of the opposite doctrine of nationalism and centralization.

From the year 1836, when the agitation to abolish slavery had become well-organized, Calhoun appeared in the Senate as the foremost defender of the slave-system, declaring in fact that "slavery was a positive good." For a brief period as Secretary-of-State in 1844 and 1845, he worked laboriously to secure the annexation of Texas and thereby to preserve the balance in the Senate between the free States of the North and the slave States of the South. He, however, did not favor the Mexican War when it came; and he opposed vigorously the prosecution of this war for the mere purpose of securing indemnities from Mexico.

He foresaw clearly the great struggle that would arise from the acquisition of vast territories, like California and New Mexico, concerning their status as prospective slave, or free, States; and, as early as 1847, he declared in the Senate that

the United States had no authority to deprive any section of its full and equal rights in such territories. As Calhoun had expected when California applied for admission to the Union as a free State in 1849, one of the greatest crises in our history was brought about, with threats of secession heard on all sides.

At this time, Calhoun was an old man, broken in health and really on the point of death, possessing still however the most acute power of logical analysis and the most dogged spirit of determination to preserve for the South its victory in the Mexican War. Accordingly, in March, 1850, he prepared one of the most remarkable speeches that was ever heard in Congress, setting forth with statesmanlike precision the whole history of the agitation against slavery and its effect upon the Union, declaring that the North must now make elaborate concessions to the South or prepare for a dissolution of the Union. This speech of March 4, 1850, Calhoun himself was unable to deliver; but, seated in the Senate, with the mark of death already fixed upon his countenance, he listened to his own fateful message as it was read by another.

Four weeks later, Calhoun died, leaving the nation in the midst of this great crisis, which threatened its existence, and from which it was saved by the statesmanship of Clay and Webster.

For forty years, Calhoun had been one of the most conspicuous leaders in framing the policies of the nation, at first an ardent advocate of nationalism, but in the end the foremost defender of State rights and slavery. Though never popular beyond the limits of his own State, Calhoun was universally recognized as one of the great intellectual giants of his age, a leading statesman, an able orator, a keen debater, and one of the most profound political philosophers of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Calhoun's fame as an orator rests, not on any single speech,

but rather on a long series of statesmanlike utterances beginning with his first appearance at the national capital. His best known speeches are, however, his speech on the *Militia Bill* in 1811, delivered in reply to John Randolph and in support of measures leading to active preparation for the War of 1812; his speech in support of the *Tariff of 1816;* his speech denouncing the *Force Bill* in 1833, and his speech in support of *State Rights* in the same year; his speech denouncing *Incendiary Publications* in 1836; his speeches in the following year against the *Expunging Resolution* and against *Abolition Petitions;* his speech on the *Oregon Question* in 1846; his protest on the *Ten Regiment Bill* in 1848; and in 1850 his last great speech on the *Slavery Question.*

Compared with Clay or Webster, Calhoun fell far short of attaining the sublime heights of their impassioned eloquence; but, in the field of parliamentary debate, he was easily a match for either, or both, of these statesmen combined. Few men in history have ever had more profound knowledge than he of American constitutional principles, and none has ever excelled him in the keen analytical powers of his mind. Almost solely by means of his "iron-bound logic" and his plain, blunt, earnestness of expression, he forged his way into the front rank of American statesmen and orators, and will long be remembered as the greatest representative of the South in the era preceding the Civil War.

Historical Setting of Calhoun's Speeches on the Force Bill and State Rights

Though Calhoun was the real author of the doctrine of nullification, it was not his privilege to advocate it first in the United States Senate. That privilege was accorded to

Robert Y. Hayne, as Senator from South Carolina, while Calhoun was serving as Vice President, during the famous Hayne-Webster debate of 1830.

This debate served to crystalize the sentiment of both North and South, and was but a prelude to many bold acts of South Carolina, leading up to the Nullification Ordinance of 1832. Webster, himself, felt that his *Reply to Hayne* had not laid the ghost of nullification in the State of South Carolina, where it had originated; and so the issue proved. Under the prevailing discontent with the tariff of 1828 and 1832, Calhoun issued appeal after appeal to the people of his State to put into operation his favorite doctrine; and finally he succeeded in securing the adoption of the Nullification Ordinance by a convention called for that purpose at the State capital on November 24, 1832.

Throughout his agitation to accomplish this result, Calhoun had hoped for the co-operation of President Jackson, as a Southern man, who, he thought, would uphold this doctrine as a Southern policy. His first shock, however, was received, only two months after the Hayne-Webster debate, when at a dinner in Washington, on Jefferson's birthday, Jackson responded to a toast with these words: "The Union, it must and shall be preserved"—while Calhoun responded with a toast: "The Union, next to our liberty the most dear; may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the States, and distributing equally the benefits and the burdens of the Union."

The second shock to Calhoun came when, in response to the Nullification Ordinance, Jackson issued a proclamation denouncing that document, appealing to the people of the State to desist from their ruinous enterprise, and giving them to understand that, if they persisted, he would employ the

whole force of the Union to maintain its authority and its laws.

In South Carolina, the President's proclamation was received with defiance; a counter-proclamation was issued; and Calhoun was sent to the Senate to be the champion of nullification at the capital.

Such audacity was hardly suited, however, to conciliate the occupant of the White House. It only served to make him furious; and many were the rumors that he threatened to hang Calhoun on a gibbet "as high as Haman." Jackson would not yield an inch; and, as soon as Congress assembled, he sent it a message requesting that provision might be made to enable him to enforce the laws by means of the land and naval forces if necessary.

Meanwhile, however, Clay had come upon the scene with a tariff measure proposing great reductions in the revenue to conciliate South Carolina. This measure was strongly opposed by Webster as a cowardly concession; and, while he was debating it, the so-called *Force Bill* to coerce South Carolina was reported to the Senate.

The wrath of Calhoun was instantly roused by the introduction of this bill, and in a speech of the most burning eloquence, coupled with the most dry and solid logic—a speech occupying two days for its delivery, February 15 and 16, 1833, he denounced it before his colleagues, and set forth in unmistakable terms his doctrine of nullification.

Such a speech Webster could not safely ignore, and so, on the following day, he replied to Calhoun's theory that the Constitution was a mere compact between the States, which might be broken whenever a State felt that it imposed undue restrictions on its welfare and its progress. The Constitution, Webster maintained, was a fundamental law that could not be

broken, establishing a Union from which no State had the right to secede. On every point, Webster opposed the doctrine of Calhoun, defending the Constitution for what it actually was and what it had come to mean in fact, and not hesitating to enter the debatable ground of its historical origin. There, Webster was weak; but his argument, nevertheless, provided many a plausible contention for the doctrine that the Union was indissoluble, and it afterwards became a great bulwark for those who upheld the Constitution as a fundamental law during the bloody arbitrament of the Civil War. This speech from Webster had none of the rhetorical splendor and popular appeal of his former *Reply to Hayne,* but it was a fitting supplement to that great speech; and his biographer has declared that "perhaps there is no speech ever made by Webster that is so close in its reasoning, so compact, and so powerful."

While this great debate was in progress, Clay was using every effort to support Calhoun and defeat the *Force Bill.* To divert attention, he pressed with all his power the compromise tariff measure; but all his efforts to defeat Webster were in vain. The *Force Bill* was passed on February 20, and thus the Federal government threw down the gage of battle.

Clay was not to be outdone, however, in his efforts to bring about conciliation. He rushed his tariff bill through the House and brought it to the Senate on February 25, where it was opposed by Webster as a measure that abandoned the policy of protection and sacrificed the dignity of the nation to the demands of a rebellious State. In Webster's opinion it was high time to test the power of the national government to maintain its authority and execute its laws.

Against the most determined opposition, Clay was obliged to plead for the passage of his measure. He was charged with

inconsistency and with a vile personal ambition to promote his political schemes for the presidency. Yet, to all such charges, he replied with the most overwhelming and indignant eloquence, arguing that the *Force Bill* and the "bill of peace" should go together: the one "to demonstrate the power and the disposition to vindicate the authority and the supremacy of the laws of the Union"; and the other, "to offer that which, accepted in the fraternal spirit in which it was tendered, would supersede the necessity of the employment of all force."

Calhoun was delighted to accept Clay's compromise; for, by this time, he felt the keen edge of disappointment at the failure of other Southern States to follow the lead of South Carolina; and, in this measure of compromise, he knew that he had won a moral victory, which, ever afterward, would show to the South the power exerted by a threat of nullification or secession. In the Senate, however, he was obliged to put on the boldest front to save his self-respect; and therefore, with audacity, he again came forward to defy the Federal government to execute its laws by force. Taking up once more the cudgels with Webster on the day following Clay's great speech, he recalled his resolutions proclaiming the doctrine of nullification; and, in a speech of the most profound and accurate reasoning, he seemed to vindicate the justice of his position beyond the possibility of reply.

Though Calhoun welcomed Clay's compromise as a means of extricating himself from a situation that threatened to engulf him, he personally wished to be spared the humiliation of voting for it. He was told, however, that, if he could not vote for a bill to save his neck from a halter, then his neck might stretch. Accordingly, he and his followers united with Clay to pass the measure. Even Jackson, himself, was inwardly pleased with the result, although he stoutly maintained

that nothing would have given him greater happiness than to have led an army himself to reduce the recalcitrant State to subjection. On the same day, he signed the *Force Bill* and the compromise tariff bill, thus averting what promised to be a civil war for the dissolution of the Union.

John C. Calhoun: on the Force Bill
February 15-16, 1833

It is said that this bill ought to pass, because the law must be enforced. The imperial edict must be executed! It is under such sophistry, couched in general terms, without looking to the limitations which must ever exist in the practical exercise of power, that the most cruel and despotic acts ever have been covered. It was such sophistry as this that cast Daniel into the lion's den. Under the same sophistry, the bloody edicts of Nero and Caligula were executed.

The law must be enforced. Yes, the act imposing the tea tax must be executed. This was the very argument which impelled Lord North and his administration to that mad career which forever separated us from the British Crown. Under a similar sophistry, that "religion must be protected," how many massacres have been perpetrated? and how many martyrs have been tied to the stake? What! Acting on this vague abstraction, are you prepared to enforce a law without considering whether it be just or unjust, constitutional or unconstitutional? Will you collect money when it is acknowledged that it is not wanted? He who earns the money, who digs it from the earth with the sweat of his brow, has a just title to it against the universe. No one has a right to touch it without his consent except his government, and this only to the extent of his legitimate wants; to take more is robbery,

and you propose by this bill to enforce robbery by murder.

I tell you plainly that the bill, should it pass, cannot be enforced. It will prove only a blot upon your statute-book, a reproach to the year, and a disgrace to the American Senate. I repeat, it will not be executed; it will rouse the dormant spirit of the people, and open their eyes to the approach of despotism. The country has sunk into avarice and political corruption, from which nothing can arouse it but some measure, on the part of the government, of folly and madness, such as that now under consideration.

JOHN C. CALHOUN: IN SUPPORT OF STATE RIGHTS
FEBRUARY 26, 1833

I am not surprised that, with the idea of a perfect government which the Senator from Massachusetts has formed—a government of an absolute majority, unchecked and unrestrained, operating through a representative body—that he is so much shocked with what he is pleased to call the absurdity of State veto. But let me tell him, that his scheme of a perfect government, beautiful as he conceives it to be, though often tried, has invariably failed, and has always run, whenever tried, through the same uniform process of faction, corruption, anarchy, and despotism.

He considers the representative principle as the great modern improvement in legislation, and of itself sufficient to secure liberty. I cannot regard it in the light in which he does. Instead of modern, it is of remote origin, and has existed in greater or less perfection, in every free state, from the remotest antiquity. Nor do I consider it as of itself sufficient to secure liberty, though I regard it as one of the indispensable means—the means of securing the people against the tyranny and op-

pression of their rulers. To secure liberty, another means is still necessary—the means of securing the different portions of society against the injustice and oppression of each other, which can only be effected by veto, interposition, or nullification, or by whatever name the restraining power of government may be called.

The Senator seems to be enamored with his conception of a consolidated government, and avows himself to be prepared, seeking no lead, to rush in its defense to the front rank, where the blows fall heaviest and thickest. I admire his gallantry and courage; but I will tell him that he will find in the opposite ranks, under the flag of liberty, spirits as gallant as his own; and that experience will teach him, that it is infinitely easier to carry on a war of legislative exaction, by bills and enactments, than to extort by sword and bayonet from the brave and the free.

We are told, in order to justify the passage of this fatal measure, that it was necessary to present the olive branch with one hand, and the sword with the other. We scorn the alternative. You have no right to present the sword; the Constitution never put the instrument in your hands to be employed against a State; and, as to the olive branch, whether we receive it or not, will not depend on your menace, but on our own estimation of what is due to ourselves and the rest of the community, in reference to the difficult subject on which we have taken issue.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE JACKSONIAN ERA—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Robert Y. Hayne: *On the Foote Resolution* (1830)—See Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) I, 233-247.

2. Daniel Webster: *Reply to Hayne* (1830)—See *Works of Webster* (1853) III, 270-342; Johnston and Woodburn I, 248-302.
3. John C. Calhoun: *On the Force Bill* (Feb. 15-16, 1833)—See Crallé's *Works of Calhoun* (1864) II, 197-262; Moore's *American Eloquence* (1857) II, 483-505; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) III, 45-72.
4. Daniel Webster: *The Constitution Not a Compact* (Feb. 16, 1833)—See *Works of Webster* III, 448-505.
5. Henry Clay: *The Compromise Tariff* (Feb. 25, 1833)—See *Life and Speeches of H. Clay* (1853) II, 156-176.
6. John C. Calhoun: *In Support of State Rights* (Feb. 26, 1833)—See Crallé's *Works of Calhoun* II, 262-309.
7. Daniel Webster: *The Presidential Protest* (1834)—See *Works of Webster* III, 103-147.
8. Thomas H. Benton: *The Expunging Resolution* (Jan. 12, 1837)—See Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) VIII, 240-252.
9. John C. Calhoun: *The Expunging Resolution* (Jan. 14, 1837)—See Benton's *Thirty Years' View* (1854) I, 728-729; Bryan's *W. F. O.* IX, 104-108; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) III, 72-74.
10. Henry Clay: *The Expunging Resolution* (Jan. 16, 1837)—See *Life and Speeches of H. Clay* II, 295-312; Brewer IV, 23-26.

Historical Backgrounds

See Benton's *Thirty Years' View;* Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Bowers's *Party Battles of the Jackson Period;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* McMaster's *History of People of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Benton, Thomas H.—See biographies by Meigs, Roosevelt, and Rogers.
Calhoun, John C.—See biographies by Jenkins, Von Holst, Pinckney, and Hunt.
Clay, Henry—See biographies by Colton, Schurz, Hart, and T. H. Clay.
Hayne, Robert Y.—See biography by Jervey.
Jackson, Andrew—See biographies by Sumner, Bassett, Parton, and G. M. Johnson.
Webster, Daniel—See biographies by Curtis, Lodge, McMaster, and Ogg.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Calhoun's Speeches *On the Force Bill,* and *In Support of State Rights*

I. What internal evidence is there that Calhoun was familiar with Henry's speeches in opposition to the adoption of the Constitution?

II. Who were: (1) Nero; (2) Caligula?

III. What were: (1) the sophistry that cast Daniel into the lion's den—See *Book of Daniel,* Chap. 6; (2) the various steps taken by Lord North to enforce the tea tax; (3) some of the massacres to protect religion; (4) some of the martyrs who had been tied to a stake; (5) the evidence that money was not wanted; (6) some historic instances of the cycle of faction, corruption, anarchy, despotism; (7) some ancient instances of the application of the principle of representation?

IV. Is there any clause in the Constitution to warrant the passage of the Force Bill of 1833?

Dictionary Studies from John C. Calhoun

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. abstraction 2. despotism 3. dormant 4. edict 5. enamored. 6. gallant 7. nullification 8. perfect 9. sophistry 10. veto

CHAPTER VIII

THOMAS CORWIN

Orators and Oratory of the Mexican War Period.

After the Jacksonian period of American oratory, extending from 1830 to 1837, the next well defined period of great eloquence in America was that of the Mexican War, beginning with the agitation of the issues that brought on the war and extending throughout the prosecution of the war, from approximately 1844 to 1848.

At this time, a profound change became manifest in the themes that stirred American orators to display their greatest eloquence; for, in the Jacksonian era, orators had found their themes in matters pertaining to the tariff, to State rights and nullification, to the custody of public moneys, to the United States Bank, and to the balance of power between the executive, and legislative, branches of the government; but, now, they were to direct their attention to matters of foreign policy, to questions of peace and war, to the policy of expansion, and to the disposition that should be made of territory acquired through conquest.

Such a change in the themes for oratory was not brought about suddenly, however, but arose rather from causes that had sunk their roots deep into the past; and chief among these causes was the growing anti-slavery sentiment of the North, that had first showed its bitterness and its power in the debates over the Missouri Compromise in 1820.

For a period of fifteen years, it seemed as if this sentiment of opposition to slavery had died out under the beneficent influence of the compromise then made; but such apparent security for the slave interests was only a delusion. Between

1820 and 1836, in fact, there was no similar occasion to bring it out; for no new States were admitted to the Union in those years to give rise to a controversy over whether they should be free or slave; and, in any case, the Compromise seemed to provide a peaceable means for solving the problem without controversy.

But, in those years, especially after 1831, and more particularly after 1835, strong anti-slavery societies, demanding abolition of the slave system throughout all the States, had arisen. Petitions began to pour in on Congress to accomplish this purpose, and Southern statesmen began to fear for the perpetuation of their peculiar system.

They feared the growth of anti-slavery sentiment, because they knew that loss of the balance of representation between slave States and free States would place them in the power of the free States; and, as the Missouri Compromise was applied to the formation of new States, it would bring into the Union an overwhelming number of States opposed to slavery.

Up to the year 1836, the South had been able to keep a balance between the slave States and the free States by admitting States, carved out of the national domain or of other States, in pairs, one slave and one free, as in the case of Indiana and Mississippi, Illinois and Alabama, Maine and Missouri, Arkansas and Michigan; but now no further opportunity for admitting States by pairs, except in the lone instance of Florida, when it was ready, remained. That is, the territory open to the South for forming slave States was almost exhausted, while the North had indefinite possibilities for forming free States from the vast territory in the Louisiana purchase extending to the Rocky Mountains, and then in the territory of Oregon beyond the mountains, which was already claiming the attention of settlers.

The South, therefore, turned its eyes toward Texas. In 1836, that Mexican province had become settled with many Southern slaveholders. In that year, these American settlers refused to abolish slavery in accordance with the Mexican edict of emancipation, and then they made good their resistance to this edict by establishing Texas as an independent State.

From that time forward, there was agitation to bring Texas into the American Union. Intrigue after intrigue was organized to accomplish this purpose; but nothing came of these schemes until the end of the Tyler administration and the opening of the Polk administration in 1845.

At that time, Texas was annexed by a joint resolution of Congress; and, to make this addition of slave territory more palatable to the North, the Tyler and Polk administrations began to push vigorously American expansionist schemes in respect to Oregon, which would provide more free States. They demanded from Great Britain the whole of the disputed territory up to the parallel 54° 40′, which was the Southern boundary of Alaska; and, as early as 1844, they set up a war-cry of "fifty-four forty or fight."

For a time, it seemed as if the United States would have two wars on its hands at once, one with Great Britain over Oregon, and one with Mexico over Texas; but the Polk administration, becoming involved precipitately with Mexico, decided to end the Oregon question by a compromise.

In the meantime, American troops occupied disputed territory in Texas along the Rio Grande, and war with Mexico began almost immediately. California and New Mexico were seized at the outset. Then United States troops invaded Mexico. The campaign became serious. Several hard battles were fought. Dissension arose at home as to the object of the

war. Supplies were voted with difficulty. The President's own party was divided. But the campaign was pushed forward and Mexican resistance was finally crushed.

Instead of getting only the disputed territory in Texas, however, it soon became evident that the United States was to acquire permanently the whole region of California and New Mexico in addition. The South had overdone its project. It had added more territory than it was capable of forming into slave States; and, by its policy, it precipitated a great conflict as to the division of the spoils between North and South, as to what part of this territory should be free and what part slave.

This in brief is the history of the movements that culminated in what is known as the Mexican War period of American oratory. Throughout the years leading up to this period, most of the great oratory was produced by anti-slavery orators, such as, for example, John Quincy Adams in the national House of Representatives, and Wendell Phillips on the lecture platform; while John C. Calhoun was the head and front of the pro-slavery forces in the United States Senate.

During the period of agitation for war with England on the Oregon question, and later, when the question of the annexation of Texas was uppermost, no orator was more conspicuous, perhaps, than Rufus Choate of Massachusetts, Webster's successor in the Senate, among those who opposed the administration measures.

When war with Mexico was actually begun, a great hue and cry was raised against it by anti-slavery orators throughout the North and especially by such men as Charles Sumner and Theodore Parker in Boston.

The Whig party, also, as a body, opposed the war; though, once the nation was committed to it, they would not consent to abandon the military forces engaged in it; and they, there-

fore, voted supplies, while they kept up a fusilade of objections to the war-aims of the administration.

In the thick of the whole fight, however, John C. Calhoun appeared, a disaffected Southern Democrat, opposed to the war altogether as a means for accomplishing the Southern purpose, then opposed to the policy of continuing the war merely to secure indemnities, and finally fighting bitterly against the scheme of a Northern Democrat, David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, who proposed that slavery should be excluded altogether from the territory acquired by the war.

In the debates that took place in Congress, therefore, during this war period, not only Calhoun, but all the Whigs including Webster and Corwin in the Senate, and Abraham Lincoln in the House, were opposed to the administration; while Lewis Cass was the chief spokesman for the administration policies in the Senate, and Thomas H. Benton and Stephen A. Douglas were among the chief supporters of the administration in the House.

Among all the great orators of this period, however, none has retained a more brilliant and permanent reputation for eloquence on the issues involved in the conflict than has Thomas Corwin of Ohio.

This man won national fame as an orator for a political speech made in defense of General William Henry Harrison, the Whig candidate for the presidency in 1840—when he delivered in the House of Representatives one of the most screamingly humorous and witty speeches ever heard within the walls of Congress—and then extended his reputation for eloquence by delivering in the Senate, seven years later, the most brilliant, and the most memorable, indictment of the whole war policy of the administration during the war with Mexico.

For these two speeches, Thomas Corwin is recognized as one of the foremost political orators of America; and for the latter of these two speeches, he is accorded the rank of being the greatest orator of the Mexican War period in American history.

The Life of Thomas Corwin

Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, was a brilliant, self-made orator and statesman, idolized by the people of his adopted State, in much the same way that Henry Clay was venerated in Kentucky; and, during the period of the War with Mexico, he stood forth as the most captivating political orator of America.

Corwin was born in Bourbon County, Kentucky, in the year 1794; but, when he was four years old, he went with his father to Ohio, where he spent his boyhood and youth on a farm, with the most meager opportunities to obtain even the rudiments of an education.

After his twenty-first year, he managed, however, to study law; and, in 1818, he was admitted to the bar. By his ready wit and native eloquence, he soon acquired an extensive practice; and, in 1822, he was sent to Congress, as a representative of the Whig party from the Miami district.

He remained in the lower House at the national capital for a period of eighteen years, until 1840, when he retired to accept the governorship of Ohio, after a brilliant campaign, during which he and Harrison, the candidate for President, stumped the State together on a speaking tour that made Corwin the great popular idol and favorite political son of Ohio.

Corwin was defeated in his candidacy for the governorship two years later; but, in 1844, he swept the State once more in the campaign to elect Clay to the presidency, and secured for himself a seat in the United States Senate.

There he opposed vigorously the prosecution of the War with Mexico, and, as a result, destroyed all his future chances for political advancement. He served, however, as Secretary-of-the-Treasury in the cabinet of Fillmore; and, after serving another term in the lower House from 1858 to 1860, he was appointed by Lincoln as minister to Mexico, where he remained until the arrival of the ill-fated emperor, Maximilian. He then retired from public life to practice law in Washington, co-operating, however, in every movement to re-establish peace during the Civil War, until his death in 1865.

The fame of Corwin, as an orator, rests largely upon two noteworthy speeches, delivered in Congress; the first, given in the House of Representatives, in 1840, in reply to General Crary, as a defense of General Harrison, against an assault upon him, on the ground of military incapacity; and the second, given in the Senate, in 1847, against the War with Mexico.

The speech, *In Reply to General Crary,* is justly regarded as one of the most humorous, as well as one of the most overwhelming, retorts ever heard in Congress, bringing from John Quincy Adams the comment that thereafter Corwin's opponent was always referred to as "the late Mr. Crary." For sparkling humor and delicious irony, this speech was perhaps never equalled in Congress, until, thirty-one years afterward, in January, 1871, James Proctor Knott delivered his convulsingly humorous address on *The Glories of Duluth* in connection with the *St. Croix and Bayfield Railroad* Bill, which, by the way, Duluth survived, but the orator did not.

In contrast with this magnificent piece of Corwin's oratorical satire, his other brilliant speech, *Against War with Mexico,* seems almost to have been composed by an utterly different speaker; yet, in it, may be traced the same subtle power of

genius in its sublime descriptive passages and its overwhelming irony. This speech, though it reacted to kill its author's political future, is regarded as the most captivating piece of eloquence produced in America during the period of the War with Mexico; and, because it aroused such universal interest, both then and among succeeding generations—with unbounded admiration on the one side, and equally unbounded denunciation on the other—it has given to Corwin a permanent reputation as one of the most brilliant of American political orators.

Thomas Corwin: In Reply to General Crary
February 14, 1840

In all other countries, and in all former times, a gentleman who would either speak or be listened to on the subject of war, involving subtle criticisms and strategy, and careful reviews of marches, sieges, battles, regular and casual, and irregular onslaughts, would be required to show, first, that he had studied much, investigated fully, and digested the science and history of his subject.

But here, sir, no such painful preparation is required; witness the gentleman from Michigan! He has announced to the House that he is a militia general on the peace establishment! That he is a lawyer we know, tolerably well read in Tidd's *Practice* and Espinasse's *Nisi Prius*. These studies so happily adapted to the subject of war, with an appointment in the militia in time of peace, furnish him at once with all the knowledge necessary to discourse to us, as from high authority, upon all the mysteries of the "trade of death."

Again, Mr. Speaker, it must occur to every one, that we, to whom these questions are submitted and these military criticisms are addressed, being all colonels at least, and most of us,

like the gentleman himself, brigadiers, are, of all conceivable tribunals, best qualified to decide any nice points connected with military science.

I hope the House will not be alarmed with the impression that I am about to discuss one or the other of the military questions now before us at length, but I wish to submit a remark or two, by way of preparing us for a proper appreciation of the merits of the discourse we have heard.

I trust as we are all brother-officers, that the gentleman from Michigan, and the two hundred and forty colonels or generals of this honorable House, will receive what I have to say as coming from an old brother in arms, and addressed to them in a spirit of candor,

"Such as becometh comrades free,
Reposing after victory."

Sir, we all know the military studies of the military gentleman from Michigan before he was promoted. I take it to be beyond a reasonable doubt that he has perused with great care the title-page of *Baron Steuben*. Nay, I go further; as the gentleman has incidentally assured us that he is prone to look into musty and neglected volumes, I venture to assert, without vouching in the least from personal knowledge, that he has prosecuted his researches so far as to be able to know that the rear rank stands right behind the front. This, I think, is fairly inferable from what I understood him to say of the two lines of encampment at Tippecanoe.

Thus we see, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Michigan, being a militia general, as he has told us, his brother officers, in that simple statement has revealed the glorious history of toils, privations, sacrifices, and bloody scenes, through which, we know from experience and observation, a militia officer, in time of peace, is sure to pass.

We all in fancy now see the gentleman from Michigan in that most dangerous and glorious event in the life of a militia general on the peace establishment—a parade day! That day, for which all the other days of his life seem to have been made. We can see the troops in motion—umbrellas, hoes, and axe-handles, and other deadly implements of war, overshadowing all the fields when lo! the leader of the host approaches!

"Far off his coming shines!"

His plume which, after the fashion of the great Bourbon, is of awful length, and reads its doleful history in the bereaved necks and bosoms of forty neighboring hen-roosts. Like the great Suwaroff, he seems somewhat careless in forms or points of dress; hence his epaulettes may be on his shoulders, back, or sides, but still gleaming, gloriously gleaming, in the sun.

Mounted he is, too, let it not be forgotten. Need I describe to the colonels and generals of this honorable House the steed which heroes bestride on these occasions? No! I see the memory of other days is with you. You see before you the gentleman from Michigan, mounted on his crop-eared, bushy-tailed mare, the singular obliquity of whose hinder limbs is best described by that most expressive phrase, "sickle hams" —for height just fourteen hands, "all told"; yes, sir: there you see his "steed that laughs at the shaking of the spear"; that is his war horse, "whose neck is clothed with thunder."

Mr. Speaker, we have glowing descriptions in history of Alexander the Great and his war horse Bucephalus, at the head of the invincible Macedonian phalanx; but, sir, such are the improvements of modern times, that every one must see that our militia general, with his crop-eared mare with bushy tail and sickle hams, would totally frighten off a battle-field a hundred Alexanders.

But, sir, to the history of the parade day. The general, thus

mounted and equipped, is in the field and ready for action. On the eve of some desperate enterprise, such as giving order to shoulder arms, it may be, there occurs a crisis, one of those accidents of war, which no sagacity could foresee nor prevent. A cloud rises and passes over the sun! Here is an occasion for the display of that greatest of all traits in the history of a commander—the tact which enables him to seize upon and turn to good account unlooked-for events as they arise. Now for the caution wherewith the Roman Fabius foiled the skill and courage of Hannibal! A retreat is ordered, and troops and general, in a twinkling, are found safely bivouacked in a neighboring grocery.

But even here the general still has room for the execution of heroic deeds. Hot from the field, and chafed with the heroic events of the day, your general unsheathes his trenchant blade, eighteen inches in length, as you will remember, and with energy and remorseless fury he slices the water-melons that lie in heaps around him, and shares them with his surviving friends.

Others of the sinews of war are not wanting here. Whiskey, Mr. Speaker, that great leveller of modern times, is here also, and the shells of the water-melons are filled to the brim. Here, again, Mr. Speaker, is shown how the extremes of barbarism and civilization meet. As the Scandinavian heroes of old, after the fatigues of war, drank wine from the skulls of their slaughtered enemies in Odin's halls, so now our militia general and his forces, from the skulls of the melons thus vanquished, in copious draughts of whiskey assuage the heroic fire of their souls after a parade day.

But, alas, for this short-lived race of ours! all things will have an end, and so it is even with the glorious achievements of our general. Time is on the wing, and will not stay his

flight; the sun, as if frightened at the mighty events of the day, rides down the sky, and "at the close of day, when the hamlet is still," the curtain of night drops upon the scene,

"And Glory, like the phoenix in its fires,
Exhales its odors, blazes, and expires."

Historical Setting of Corwin's Speech Against War with Mexico

To have been the author of the most magnificent speech in Congress during the whole course of the Mexican War, when such eminent statesmen as Calhoun, Cass, Benton, and Webster were almost daily engaged in passages-at-arms, is no slight praise. Yet such a tribute must be paid to a comparatively new-comer in the Senate, to "Tom Corwin of Ohio" as he was affectionately known, for his one great speech, *Against War with Mexico,* which contains strain after strain of the loftiest, most sublime, and highly impassioned oratory.

This speech was delivered in the United States Senate, on February 11, 1847, when a bill calling for an appropriation of three million dollars, to bring the existing war with Mexico to a speedy and honorable conclusion, was under consideration.

Ever since the opening of Congress on December 2, 1846, when the President in his message had rebuked the Whig leaders for giving "aid and comfort" to the enemy, the administration had been under fire for its conduct of the war. During the late summer and early fall, the nation had become thoroughly aroused through the realization that the war was being conducted for the sole purpose of winning new territory for slavery. As long as the war seemed to be one of defense, all sections responded manfully for its prosecution; but, when

other sinister motives became evident, a strong protest was heard from many Northern States, and here and there from the South as well.

The Whigs particularly had come to Congress with the purpose of asking many embarrassing questions. They wanted to know whether the war was made by the President, or by Congress; whether it was a war of conquest, or for a durable peace and final settlement of boundaries; and whether Mexico had begun it, or whether the United States had done so by invading Mexican territory.

When bills were introduced to provide additional military forces, to increase the pay of the army, to provide for naval service, or to appropriate money for war expenses, these harassing questions were propounded; and they were always answered by the Whigs in this fashion: the war, they said, was the President's war; it was unnecessary and unjust; and it had its origin in a quenchless thirst for conquest.

"They objected to the war," says McMaster, the historian, "because it caused a prodigal squandering of blood and money; because it was an offensive war, and as such ought to be regarded as criminal and barbarous; because the acquisition of territory from Mexico, in order to establish slavery where it had not existed, was a backward step in the march of civilization, and as such was a national calamity; because it was a wicked attempt to force a people into our Union against their consent; because a war between the two largest republics in the world was not likely to aid the spread of civil liberty and democratic government; and because the money foolishly wasted on it would have built a railroad and a telegraph line to Oregon and cut a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. It was the direct outcome," they said, "of the annexation of Texas, and after the conquest and dismemberment of Mexico,

it was planned to spread slavery over free soil as the crowning crime of this work of iniquity."

All these arguments were rehearsed whenever any bill was introduced by the administration; and the Whigs for their opposition became quite hardened to the epithets of "Mexicans" and "traitors." The great clash of the contending forces came, however, when, early in February, the administration leaders introduced in both Houses a bill calling for an appropriation of three million dollars, which it was secretly understood, was to be used by the President to bribe Mexican officials to relinquish to us vast territories like California and New Mexico.

To this bill, the House, after bitter wrangling, attached the *Wilmot Proviso,* that slavery should be forever forbidden in territory bought by this money; and, in the Senate, two conflicting amendments were moved; the first by Berrien of Georgia, that this money should not be spent for the dismemberment of Mexico, nor for the acquisition of any part of her territory; and the second, by Cass of Michigan, that the war should be vigorously prosecuted to obtain full indemnity from Mexico for alleged wrongs done to the government and citizens of the United States.

While these two amendments were pending, Calhoun and Cass had a bitter controversy on February 9 and 10—Calhoun maintaining that the war should be defensive behind the line that we contended was our proper boundary; and Cass maintaining that it was necessary to press our conquests even to the capital of Mexico itself to bring that country to its knees and obtain redress.

At this stage of the debate, it was announced that, on the following day, Corwin would present his views. "Early in the morning," says Sargent, in his *Public Men and Events,* "the

Senate galleries were crowded to hear this brilliant speaker, whose fame for wit and irony had been noised abroad from recollections of his convulsing *Reply to General Crary,* delivered in the House some seven years before. So great, indeed, was the crowd, that it swarmed into the Senate chamber itself and occupied every available inch of room about the renowned speaker."

Under these most favorable auspices, Corwin began his great speech; rehearsing all the familiar arguments of the Whigs against the war; but going further than any member of the opposition had yet dared to go, in announcing his intention to refuse to vote for appropriations for a war of conquest. These appropriations, he claimed, were for the purpose of enlisting men, to march them off, to fight another people, merely to be paid for this butchery in money secured from the victim. He would not vote supplies for such a purpose. If he were a Mexican, he said, he would greet our soldiers with "bloody hands," and welcome them to "hospitable graves." The argument that we needed room, he said, was ridiculous. And so was that other superstitious argument that we must advance, because it was our "destiny." This argument had always been the war cry of conquerors in the past, and it had always brought down from a just God the vengeance of retributive justice. As in all former instances, so would America suffer; and this war would "light up the fires of internal conflict"; it would "plunge the sister States of this Union into the bottomless gulf of civil strife."

When Corwin began his speech, he felt that he was standing utterly alone in refusing to vote appropriations for a war of conquest. He knew that he had separated himself from the great bulk of his party, and that even Webster and Crittenden,

who once seemed to approve his sentiments, were not likely to stand by him.

Yet after the speech was finished and the debate had continued for nearly three more weeks, a great change seemed to have taken place in the attitude of Corwin's party. In the meantime, Webster had submitted resolutions declaring that the war was not conducted for the acquisition of territory, nor for the dismemberment of Mexico; and Calhoun had submitted resolutions declaring that territory to be obtained should be regarded as the joint and common property of the slave-holding and free States. Neither of the resolutions was voted upon, but each served to crystallize opinion.

Then, on March 1, eighteen days after Corwin's speech, the *Three Million Dollar Bill* was voted upon. The result was a narrow victory for the administration; and, contrary to Corwin's expectations, he was not left to stand alone; for, against the twenty-nine administration votes, twenty-four Senators voted with Corwin to refuse the appropriation.

For more than a month, no public report of Corwin's speech was made; and, in the meantime, a terrible crisis for General Taylor's army in Mexico at the battle of Buena Vista had been passed. At such a time, words like those of Corwin seemed treasonable, and the press everywhere denounced him as a "Mexican" and a "traitor." Everywhere, editors recalled those words about receiving American soldiers with "bloody hands" and welcoming them to "hospitable graves." Even Corwin's party associates rebuked him for having said the right thing at the wrong time; and, as he himself said afterwards, from Maine to Texas, in every village that had sent a soldier to the war, he was burned in effigy as a traitor to his country.

Only among the prominent anti-slavery leaders of the Whig party was the speech received with favor. In New England

several leaders immediately proposed Corwin as the next candidate of the party for the presidency, and Horace Greeley of the New York *Tribune* seriously proposed his name to men high in the party councils.

Nothing came of these proposals, however, and Corwin came gradually to feel that this speech, though subsequently admired through many generations, had struck his death-knell in the field of politics.

History has not fulfilled in detail all the direful prophecies of Corwin's speech. Yet, as James Schouler, the historian, has said, the "divine retribution," of which Corwin spoke, "followed as quickly as that speech predicted, and the delusion of 'manifest destiny' brought its appropriate punishment. The iniquitious war with Mexico drove from public confidence the politicians and the political set by whom it was provoked. In less than five years, North and South were brought almost to civil war to settle the social status of the territory acquired from Mexico; in five years more, the rivalry between North and South, still further strengthened, was transferred to other territory and other new projects for slave conquest; another five years saw civil disruption and a civil war such as the world had never witnessed; and, before twenty years had elapsed, slavery and slave confederacy had melted alike in the fervent heat of a strife which began in their unhallowed attempt to wrest the domain of a weaker republic for the spread and perpetuation of slave institutions."

Though Corwin's prophecy was spurned by many of those to whom it was delivered, he lived to see fulfilled that law of divine retribution which he so boldly declared; and he lived also to see that this speech, so disastrous to his political fortunes had made his name imperishable in the list of America's most renowned political orators.

Thomas Corwin: Against War with Mexico
February 11, 1847

I. The Iniquity and Futility of the Proposed War Appropriation

The President has said that he does not expect to hold Mexican territory by conquest. Why then conquer it? Why waste thousands of lives and millions of money fortifying towns and creating governments, if, at the end of the war, you retire from the graves of your soldiers and the desolated country of your foes, only to get money from Mexico for the expense of all your toil and sacrifice? Who ever heard, since Christianity was propagated among men, of a nation taxing its people, enlisting its young men, and marching them off two thousand miles to fight a people merely to be paid for it in money? What is this but hunting a market for blood, selling the lives of your young men, marching them in regiments to be slaughtered and paid for like oxen and brute beasts?

Sir, this is, when stripped naked, that atrocious idea first promulgated in the President's message, and now advocated here, of fighting on till we can get our indemnity for the past, as well as the present, slaughter. We have chastised Mexico; and, if it were worth while to do so, we have, I dare say, satisfied the world that we can fight.

Now that you have overrun half of Mexico and have exasperated and irritated her people, you claim indemnity for all expenses incurred in doing this mischief and boldly ask her to give up New Mexico and California; and, as a bribe to her patriotism, seizing on her property, you offer three millions to pay the soldiers she has called out to repel your invasion on condition that she will give up to you at least one-third of her

whole territory. This is the modest—I should say, monstrous —proposition now before us as explained by the chairman of the committee on foreign relations, who reported the bill. I can not now give my consent to this.

You may wrest provinces from Mexico by war—you may hold them by the right of the strongest—you may rob her; but a treaty of peace to that effect with the people of Mexico, legitimately and freely made, you never will have! I thank God that it is so, as well for the sake of the Mexican people as ourselves; for, unlike the Senator from Alabama, I do not value the life of a citizen of the United States above the lives of a hundred thousand Mexican women and children—a rather cold sort of philanthropy in my judgment. For the sake of Mexico, then, as well as our own country, I rejoice that it is an impossibility that you can obtain by treaty from her those territories under the existing state of things.

What is the territory, Mr. President, which you propose to wrest from Mexico? It is consecrated to the heart of the Mexican by many a well-fought battle with his old Castilian master. His Bunker Hills, and Saratogas, and Yorktowns are there. The Mexican can say, "There I bled for liberty! and shall I surrender that consecrated home of my affections to the Anglo-Saxon invaders? What do they want with it? They have Texas already. They have possessed themselves of the territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. What else do they want? To what shall I point my children as memorials of that independence which I bequeath to them when those battle-fields shall have passed from my possession?"

Sir, had one come and demanded Bunker Hill of the people of Massachusetts, had England's lion showed himself there, is there a man over thirteen and under ninety who would not have been ready to meet him; is there a river on this continent

that would not have run red with blood; is there a field but would have been piled high with the unburied bones of slaughtered Americans before these consecrated battle-fields of liberty should have been wrested from us? But this same American goes into a sister republic and says to poor, weak Mexico, "Give up your territory—you are unworthy to possess it—I have got one-half already—all I ask of you is to give up the other!"

II. Folly of the Argument that We Needed Room

Sir, it is not meet that our flag should throw its protecting folds over expeditions for lucre and for land. But you still say you want room for your people. This has been the plea of every robber-chief from Nimrod to the present hour. I dare say, when Tamerlane descended from his throne built of seventy thousand human skulls, and marched his ferocious battalions to further slaughter, I dare say he said, "I want room."

Bajazet was another gentleman of kindred tastes and wants with us Anglo-Saxons—he "wanted room." Alexander, too, the mighty "Macedonian madman," when he wandered with his Greeks to the plains of India and fought a bloody battle on the very ground where recently England and the Sikhs engaged in strife for "room," was no doubt in quest of some California there. Many a Monterey had he to storm to get "room."

Sir, he made quite as much of that sort of history as you ever will. Mr. President, do you remember the last chapter in that history? It is soon read. Oh! I wish we could but understand its moral. Ammon's son (so was Alexander named) after all his victories, died drunk in Babylon! The vast empire he conquered to "get room" became the prey of

the generals he had trained; it was disparted, torn in pieces, and so ended. Sir, there is a very significant appendix; it is this: The descendants of the Greeks—of Alexander's Greeks—are now governed by a descendant of Attila!

Sir, I have read in some account of your battle of Monterey, of a lovely Mexican girl, who, with the benevolence of an angel in her bosom and the robust courage of a hero in her heart, was busily engaged during the bloody conflict, amid the crash of falling houses, the groans of the dying, and the wild shriek of battle, in carrying water to slake the burning thirst of the wounded of either host. While bending over a wounded American soldier, a cannon-ball struck her and blew her to atoms! Sir, I do not charge my brave, generous-hearted countrymen who fought that fight with this. No, no! We who send them—we who know that scenes like this, which might send tears of sorrow "down Pluto's iron Cheek," are the invariable, inevitable attendants on war—we are accountable for this. And this—this is the way we are to be made known to Europe. This—this is to be the undying renown of free, republican America! "She has stormed a city—killed many of its inhabitants of both sexes—she has room!" So it will read. Sir, if this were our only history, then may God of His mercy grant that its volume may speedily come to a close.

Why is it, sir, that we, the United States, a people of yesterday compared with the older nations of the world, should be waging war for territory—for "room?" Look at your country, extending from the Allegheny Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, capable itself of sustaining in comfort a larger population than will be in the whole Union for one hundred years to come. Over this vast expanse of territory your population is now so sparse that I believe we provided, at the last session, a regiment of mounted men to guard the mail from the frontier of

Missouri to the mouth of the Columbia; and yet you persist in the ridiculous assertion, "I want room." One would imagine from the frequent reiteration of the complaint, that you had a bursting, teeming population, whose energy was paralyzed, whose enterprise was crushed, for want of space. Why should we be so weak or so wicked as to offer this idle apology for ravaging a neighboring Republic? It will impose on no one at home or abroad.

III. Retributive Justice

Mr. President, this uneasy desire to augment our territory has depraved the moral sense and blunted the otherwise keen sagacity of our people. What has been the fate of all nations who have acted upon the idea that they must advance! Our young orators cherish this notion with a fervid but fatally mistaken zeal. They call it by the mysterious name of "destiny." "Our destiny," they say, is "onward," and hence they argue, with ready sophistry, the propriety of seizing upon any territory and any people that may lie in the way of their fated advance. Recently these progressives have grown classical; some assiduous student of antiquities has helped them to a patron saint. They have wandered back into the desolate Pantheon, and there, among the polytheistic relics of that "pale mother of dead empires;" they have found a god whom these Romans, centuries gone by, baptized "Terminus."

Sir, I have heard much and read somewhat of this gentleman, Terminus. Alexander, of whom I have spoken, was a devotee of this divinity. We have seen the end of him and his empire. It was said to be an attribute of this god that he must always advance and never recede. So both republican and imperial Rome believed. It was, as they said, their destiny. And for a while it did seem to be even so. Roman

Terminus did advance. Under the eagles of Rome he was carried from his home on the Tiber to the farthest East on the one hand, and to the far West, among the then barbarous tribes of Western Europe, on the other.

But at length the time came when retributive justice had become "a destiny." The despised Gaul calls out the contemned Goth, and Attila with his Huns answers back the battle-shout to both. The "blue-eyed nations of the North," in succession or united, pour forth their countless hosts of warriors upon Rome and Rome's always advancing god Terminus. And now the battle-ax of the barbarian strikes down the conquering eagle of Rome. Terminus at last recedes, slowly at first, but finally he is driven to Rome, and from Rome to Byzantium. Whoever would know the further fate of this Roman deity, so recently taken under the patronage of American democracy, may find ample gratification of his curiosity in the luminous pages of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall.*

Such will find that Rome thought as you now think, that it was her destiny to conquer provinces and nations, and no doubt she sometimes said, as you say, "I will conquer a peace," and where now is she, the mistress of the world? The spider weaves his web in her palaces; the owl sings his watch-song in her towers. Teutonic power now lords it over the servile remnant, the miserable memento of old and once omnipotent Rome.

Sad, very sad, are the lessons which time has written for us. Through and in them all I see nothing but the inflexible execution of that old law which ordains as eternal that cardinal rule, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, nor anything which is his." Since I have lately heard so much about the dismemberment of Mexico, I have looked back to see how, in the course of events, which some call "providence," it has fared with other nations who engaged in this work of dis-

memberment. I see that, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, three powerful nations, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, united in the dismemberment of Poland. They said, too, as you say, "It is our destiny." They "wanted room." Doubtless each of these thought, with his share of Poland, his power was too strong ever to fear invasion, or even insult. One had his California, another his New Mexico, and the third his Vera Cruz. Did they remain untouched and incapable of harm? Alas! no—far, very far, from it. Retributive justice must fulfil its destiny, too.

A very few years pass off, and we hear of a new man, a Corsican lieutenant, the self-named "armed soldier of democracy," Napoleon. He ravages Austria, covers her land with blood, drives the Northern Caesar from his capital, and sleeps in his palace. Austria may now remember how her power trampled upon Poland. Did she not pay dear, very dear, for her California?

But has Prussia no atonement to make? You see this same Napoleon, the blind instrument of providence, at work there. The thunders of his cannon at Jena proclaim the work of retribution for Poland's wrongs; and the successors of the great Frederick, the drill-sergeant of Europe, are seen flying across the sandy plain that surrounds their capital, right glad if they may escape captivity or death.

But how fares it with the autocrat of Russia? Is he secure in his share of the spoils of Poland? No. Suddenly we see, sir, six hundred thousand men marching to Moscow. Does his Vera Cruz protect him now? Far from it. Blood, slaughter, desolation spread abroad over the land, and finally the conflagration of the old commercial metropolis of Russia closes the retribution she must pay for her share in the dismemberment of her weak and impotent neighbor.

Mr. President, a mind more prone to look for the judgments

of heaven in the doings of men than mine, can not fail in this to see the providence of God. When Moscow burned, it seemed as if the earth was lighted up that the nations might behold the scene. As that mighty sea of fire gathered and heaved and rolled upward and yet higher till its flames licked the stars and fired the whole heavens, it did seem as though the God of the nations was writing in characters of flame on the front of his throne that doom shall fall upon the strong nation which tramples in scorn upon the weak. And what fortune awaits him, the appointed executor of this work, when it was all done? He, too, conceived the notion that his destiny pointed onward to universal dominion. France was too small —Europe, he thought, should bow down before him.

But as soon as this idea took possession of his soul, he, too, becomes powerless. His Terminus must recede, too. Right there, while he witnessed the humiliation and doubtless meditated subjugation of Russia, He who holds the winds in His fist gathered the snows of the north and blew them upon his six hundred thousand men; they fled—they froze—they perished. And now the mighty Napoleon, who has resolved on universal dominion, he, too, is summoned to answer for the violation of that ancient law, "Thou shalt not covet anything which is thy neighbor's." How is the mighty fallen! He, beneath whose proud footstep Europe trembled, he is now an exile at Elba, and now finally a prisoner on the rock of St. Helena, and there, on a barren island, in an unfrequented sea, in the crater of an extinct volcano, there is the death-bed of the mighty conqueror. All his annexations have come to that! His last hour is now come, and he, the man of destiny, he who rocked the world as with the throes of an earthquake, is now powerless, still—even as a beggar, so he died. On the wings of a tempest that raged with unwonted fury, up to the throne of the

only Power that controlled him while he lived, went the fiery soul of that wonderful warrior, another witness to the existence of that eternal decree that they who do not rule in righteousness shall perish from the earth. He has found "room" at last.

And France,—she, too, has found "room." Her "eagles" now no longer scream along the banks of the Danube, the Po, the Borysthenes. They have returned home, to their old eyrie, between the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees. So it shall be with yours. You may carry them to the loftiest peaks of the Cordilleras, they may wave with insolent triumph in the halls of the Montezumas, the armed men of Mexico may quail before them, but the weakest hand in Mexico, uplifted in prayer to the God of Justice, may call down against you a Power in the presence of which the iron hearts of your warriors shall be turned into ashes.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF THE MEXICAN WAR PERIOD—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Rufus Choate: *On Occupying Oregon* (1844)—See Brown's *Works of R. Choate* (1862) II, 126-172.
2. Rufus Choate: *On the Annexation of Texas* (1844)—See ibid. II, 267-283.
3. Charles Sumner: *The True Grandeur of Nations* (1845)—See Sumner's *Orations and Speeches* (1850) Vol. I.
4. Thomas Corwin: *Against War with Mexico* (1847)—See Morrow's *Life and Speeches of Thomas Corwin* (1896), 277-314; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) VI, 113-129; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) II, 724-737; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) IX, 123-136; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) IV, 171-184.
5. Charles Sumner: *Fame and Glory* (1847)—See Sumner's *Orations and Speeches* (1850) Vol. I; also *Works of Sumner* (15 vols. 1870-1883).
6. John C. Calhoun: *The Ten Regiment Bill* (1848)—See Crallé's *Works of Calhoun* (1864) IV, 425-450.
7. Lewis Cass: *The Ten Regiment Bill* (1848)—See *Congressional Globe* (1848) First Session, 30th Cong., Appendix, 421-432; Denney, Duncan, McKinney's *Argumentation and Debate* (1910), 211-236.

8. Charles Sumner: *The War System of the Commonwealth of Nations* (1849)—See Sumner's *Orations and Speeches* (1850) II, 1-106.

For Corwin's complete speech, *In Reply to General Crary,* see Morrow's *Life and Speeches of Thomas Corwin* (1896).

For J. Proctor Knott's humorous speech on *The Glories of Duluth* (1871), see Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VIII, 753-766; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921), 317-327; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) IX, 203-211.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* McMaster's *History of People of U. S.;* Ripley's *The War with Mexico;* Sargent's *Public Men and Events;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Smith's *The Annexation of Texas;* Smith's *War with Mexico;* Smith's *Political History of Slavery.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Calhoun, John C.—See biographies by Jenkins, Von Holst, Pinckney, and Hunt.

Cass, Lewis—See biographies by Young, and McLaughlin.

Choate, Rufus—See biography by Brown.

Corwin, Thomas—See biography by Morrow, and biographical sketch in Magoon's *Living Orators of America.*

Sumner, Charles—See biographies by Chaplin and Chaplin, Grimke, Dawes, Storey, and Haynes.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Corwin's *Reply to General Crary*

I. What internal evidence is there that Corwin was familiar with: (1) Milton's *Paradise Lost,* VI, line 768; (2) *Job,* 41:29; *Job,* 39:19; (3) James Beattie's *The Hermit;* (4) Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,* line 960; (5) Dryden's *Cymon and Iphigenia,* lines 399-408?

II. Who were: (1) Baron Steuben; (2) the great Bourbon; (3) Suwaroff; (4) the Roman Fabius; (5) Hannibal; (6) Odin; (7) the Levellers of Cromwell's time?

III. What were: (1) Tippecanoe; (2) the historical works that gave a description of Alexander and Bucephalus?

On Corwin's *Speech Against War with Mexico*

I. What internal evidence is there that Corwin was familiar with: (1) Milton's *Il Penseroso,* line 107; (2) Byron's *Childe Harold,* Canto IV, Stanza 78; (3) *Book of Second Samuel,* 1:25?

II. Who were: (1) The Castilian master of Mexico; (2) Nimrod; (3) Tamerlane; (4) Bajazet; (5) the Sikhs; (6) the generals trained by Alexander; (7) Attila; (8) the descendant of Attila; (9) the despised Gaul that called out the contemned Goth; (10) the Northern Caesar; (11) the Great Frederick; (12) the Montezumas?

III. What were: (1) Mexico's "Bunker Hills, Saratogas, Yorktowns"; (2) the Nueces; (3) Monterey; (4) the Pantheon; (5) Byzantium; (6) Teutonic powers that in 1847 lorded it over Italy; (7) "the California, the New Mexico, the Vera Cruz," of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, in dismemberment of Poland?

IV. Where are: (1) Elba; (2) St. Helena; (3) the Danube; (4) the Po; (5) the Borysthenes; (6) the Cordilleras?

V. What justification was there for calling: (1) Alexander the "Macedonian madman"; (2) Alexander "Ammon's son"; (3) Napoleon "the armed soldier of democracy"?

Dictionary Studies from Thomas Corwin

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. bivouacked 2. bosoms 3. casual 4. discourse 5. inferable 6. phalanx 7. *nisi prius* 8. phoenix 9. subtle 10. tribunal

1. cardinal 2. chastised 3. contemned 4. executor 5. eyrie 6. heavens 7. impotent 8. lucre 9. meet 10. memento 11. omnipotent 12. philanthropy 13. polytheistic 14. ridiculous 15. robust 16. unwonted

CHAPTER IX

THEODORE PARKER

Parker's Place Among American Pulpit and Platform Orators

Theodore Parker and Henry Ward Beecher were the two most conspicuous anti-slavery, pulpit orators of America, both being extremely active in the Abolition movement from the beginning of their careers as clergymen, from 1837, when each took up the ministry, the one in West Roxbury, Massachusetts, and the other in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, down to the Civil War, when Parker was recognized as the greatest pulpit orator of New England, regularly holding congregations of three thousand spell-bound by his eloquence in Boston; and when, at the same time, Beecher was coming to be recognized as the greatest pulpit orator of America, regularly holding spell-bound, by his amazing eloquence, congregations of similar size in the famous Plymouth Church at Brooklyn.

Before Beecher had come to the zenith of his powers, however, Parker was already recognized as a tremendous force in the field of polite learning, theological controversy, social reform, and pulpit and platform oratory.

To claim for Theodore Parker that he was one of America's great theologians and religious controversialists, is to place his name beside that of Jonathan Edwards in colonial times, and next to, if not above, those of William Ellery Channing and Lyman Beecher in the early years of the nineteenth century.

But Parker was more than a religious controversialist; he was a social reformer in the pulpit and on the platform; and,

as he pleaded for a purer patriotism and civic righteousness from his pulpit, he was more than the peer of Channing and Lyman Beecher when they upheld the cause of the slave; he was more than a peer of Lyman Beecher and Eliphalet Nott when they denounced intemperance—he was, indeed the equal of the great Revolutionary preachers: Jonathan Mayhew of Boston, who boldly denounced the divine right of kings and the imposition of the Stamp Tax, and John Witherspoon of Princeton, who, as a member of the Continental Congress, beseeched his colleagues to hasten the Declaration of Independence.

From pulpit and platform, Theodore Parker carried on his pleading for the anti-slavery movement. He was, in fact, one of the most sought-after lecturers of the Lyceum in its early days; and, hence, his name is to be associated with all those other great names of the mid-century platform orators, whose fame has come down to modern times.

While he was speaking in every city, town, village, and hamlet of the North on the Lyceum platform, he was constantly measuring his talents and his popularity as an orator against the great giants of the lecture field; against Wendell Phillips, for example, with his superb lecture on *The Lost Arts;* against Thomas Starr King with his almost equally popular lecture on *Substance and Show;* against Edward Everett with his renowned lecture on *Washington* to raise money to purchase and preserve Mount Vernon as a national shrine; against Edwin Chapin with his famous lecture on *Modern Chivalry;* and against such other speakers as Charles Sumner, John B. Gough, Rufus Choate, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frederick Douglass, George William Curtis, and Henry Ward Beecher.

Wherever Theodore Parker spoke, he discoursed on subjects

of scholarship, theology, social reform, and slavery,—but, as the years progressed, he became more and more absorbed in the one theme, the emancipation of the slave.

With the project for annexing Texas in 1845, his great work as an anti-slavery orator began. Like all his colleagues in the Abolition movement, he was violently opposed to the annexation of Texas, and to the Mexican War, and to the acquisition of territory for the purpose of spreading slavery.

The thing that most fired his soul to action, however, was the passage of the Clay Compromise Measures in 1850 with a provision for a drastic *Fugitive Slave Law*. From that time forward, through the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, through the troubles in Kansas over slavery, through the John Brown raid on Harper's Ferry, Theodore Parker was among the foremost leaders in the Abolition movement.

Many and great were the orators that these times, between 1845 and 1860, produced; and many and great were the pulpit orators, who, during this period, denounced all compromise with slavery; but none from the ranks of the clergy in the early days of the struggle was more conspicuous, more effective, or more eloquent than Theodore Parker of Boston.

The Life of Theodore Parker

Theodore Parker was the most outstanding leader of liberal religious thought in New England for two decades, between 1840 and 1860, and at the same time he stood side by side with William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips as one of the most conspicuous leaders of the anti-slavery movement in America.

He was born at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1810, the proud descendant in the third generation from Captain John

Parker, who commanded the American militia at Lexington in the first battle of the Revolution. His family was poor and unable to give him more than a rudimentary education; but his unquenchable thirst for knowledge led him to go on foot to Cambridge unknown to his parents, and there to pass with ease the entrance examinations to Harvard College. For four years, he pursued all the studies of the collegiate course without ever attending a lecture, and then passed his final examinations for the bachelor's degree with high honors. Harvard, however, could not award him this degree unless he paid four years' tuition, and this he was unable to do. To overcome this technicality, therefore, the Harvard authorities conferred upon him later an honorary degree of master of arts.

Two years of teaching on his part, coupled with the most prodigious program of study, were followed rapidly by three years of training in the Harvard Divinity School; and, then, in 1837, he began his memorable career as a preacher. His first church was in West Roxbury, just outside of Boston, where he continued to preach for almost ten years, as a highly beloved pastor among his parishioners, year after year becoming more liberal in his theological views.

The first noteworthy event in his career as a preacher was a remarkable sermon on *The Permanent and Transient in Christianity* delivered in a South Boston church in 1841 at the ordination of a fellow-minister. Though his liberal views had previously attracted some slight criticism in that age of heresy-hunters, this sermon by its pronounced advocacy of modernist doctrines, attracted much wider criticism, and marked the beginning of the movement which finally brought about his exclusion from the pulpits of his fellow-ministers in and around Boston.

When, at last, in 1845, he was denied the fellowship of all

Orthodox and Unitarian ministers in his vicinity, he found that a small group of admirers had determined that he should be heard. They accordingly engaged, for religious services, on Sundays, the Melodeon Theater in Boston, and invited Parker to become their preacher.

In this strange place, for seven years, Parker held his services before an ever-increasing congregation that eventually over-taxed the capacity of the theater; and hence, in 1852, his devoted followers determined to change their place of worship to the newly erected Music Hall, a beautiful auditorium, where over three thousand persons, Sunday after Sunday, came regularly to hear the great preacher until his death in 1860.

Throughout all this period of his preaching, Parker continued his studies for nearly eighteen hours each day, reading omniverously on every subject within the realm of human knowledge from books printed in twenty different languages, and at the same time he wrote innumerable treatises on a vast variety of social, religious, and philosophical matters, while he kept up a correspondence of a thousand letters a week with nearly all the prominent literary men and social reformers of the time.

Not being content, however, to preach his views from his own pulpit and in the press, he undertook, in addition to all his other activities, to go on the Lyceum lecture platform; and, there, for ten years before his death, he was regarded as one of the most scholarly, yet one of the most popular, speakers of the period.

His first sermon in opposition to slavery appeared as early as 1841, and during the Mexican War, he spoke many times from his pulpit and in mass-meetings at Faneuil Hall against the spread of this evil; but his great work as an anti-slavery

leader began in 1850, with the passage of the *Fugitive Slave Law*.

To Parker this law was an act not to be endured. He could not consent to see free colored people among his own parishioners sent back in chains to bondage; and, hence, he joined with Garrison, Phillips, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, to make the law a dead letter.

As a member of the Boston Vigilance Committee, he was kept busy, day and night, defeating the purpose of the slave hunters and kidnappers in Boston. Many a colored person he concealed within his own lodgings until escape was possible. William and Ellen Craft were two fugitives whom he secretly married before sending them to England and to whom he gave a Bible for their souls and a bowie-knife for the protection of their bodies.

In the celebrated case of Thomas Simms, remanded to slavery in 1852, Parker planned a rescue that involved the capture of a ship on which he sailed, and was defeated in his purpose only by a change in the plans of the slave-hunters; while, in the even more celebrated case of Anthony Burns in 1855, Parker was a ring-leader in inciting the mob to attempt a rescue from the court-house.

For this brave act, which in many particulars resembled the shrewdest plotting of Samuel Adams in the days of the Revolution, Parker was arrested "for obstructing, resisting, and opposing the execution of the law"—but, when his trial came, his prosecutors did not dare to press the charge against him.

Thus he continued without rest for ten years to advance the anti-slavery cause, and yet every Sunday morning he was in his pulpit preaching sermons against the old traditional theology, which raised against him perfect storms of hostile criti-

cism, and yet brought converts to his views from far beyond the limits of New England.

By his almost superhuman efforts to do the work of several men in several lifetimes, he undermined his strength; and reluctantly, in 1859, he consented to travel through Europe for his health, only to find that recovery was impossible; and, in the spring of 1860, while on this pilgrimage, he died in Florence, Italy. There his body was interred, and on the stone that marked his grave were inscribed the simple words—Theodore Parker, the Great American Preacher.

Though many of Parker's utterances deserved to be remembered, those that appeal most to the patriotism of succeeding generations are, without doubt, his inspiring *Eulogy of John Quincy Adams,* delivered in 1848; his grand and mournful, yet wholly unique, *Discourse on the Death of Daniel Webster* in 1852; and his *Defence,* intended for delivery at his trial in connection with the Anthony Burns incident in 1855.

Few men in the field of pulpit oratory have made such an impression upon their times as did Theodore Parker. A radical of radicals, working for the most part outside of denominational lines, and refused admission to many Unitarian pulpits, yet he brought about one of the great religious upheavals in the middle of the last century. Like Henry Ward Beecher of Brooklyn, he preached courageously against every form of opposition, and let his stimulating words fall upon what ears they might, with the most marvelous result in the great throngs attending his services.

"After the days of Channing and Lyman Beecher," says Charles Francis Richardson, "and before the time of Phillips Brooks, Parker was the most conspicuous of Boston preachers, and the last of those whose words and works have had any general effect on American thought, insofar as that thought

has concerned itself with movements associated with individual names."

Yet Parker was more than a preacher. He was a reformer in the broadest sense of the term—one who has written his name indelibly beside those of Garrison and Phillips and Sumner in their great work of bringing about in America the emancipation of the slaves.

Immediate Background of Theodore Parker's Discourse on the Death of Daniel Webster

Theodore Parker's *Discourse on the Death of Daniel Webster* is one of the most remarkable and astounding commemorative addresses ever heard in America. It was delivered from Parker's pulpit in the Melodeon Theater, in Boston, only eight days after Webster's death, and two days after the great man's funeral at Marshfield.

When Webster died, his biographer says, "a hush fell upon the whole country. A great gap seemed to have been made in the existence of every one. Men remembered the grandeur of his form and the splendor of his intellect, and felt as if one of the pillars of the state had fallen. . . Thousands flocked to Marshfield to do honor to his memory. . . and as the crowds poured in through the gates of his farm, they saw upon a low mound of flowers, the majestic form, as impressive in the repose of death as it had been in the fullness of life and strength."

Though Parker was not among those who journeyed to Marshfield, he, too, was touched by the universal sorrow. No man suffered greater agonies of grief than he, when he contemplated the moral grandeur of Webster's early service to the nation and then beheld him a fallen, shattered idol of all

his youthful dreams, one who had succumbed to temptation, and, in his last days, during one of the nation's greatest crises, had betrayed his higher nature and defied the laws of God.

Such was Parker's feeling, vaguely outlined, as he sat in his study during that week of the nation's mourning. At eleven o'clock on Wednesday morning, he began to write his commemorative discourse, that had for years been taking form in his subconscious mind, and not until two o'clock on Saturday afternoon did he rise from his labors.

Sunday, the 31st of October, 1852, he set down in his journal as "a sad and dreadful day." He rose before his congregation, that overflowed the meeting-place in the dingy Melodeon Theater, and told them that he should be long, but promised that they should not sit uneasily in their chairs. Then for three hours, he poured forth his whole soul in passages of exquisite tenderness mingled with the most terrible denunciation.

What could be more terrific than this sublime and awful thought? "Mr. Webster," he said, "stamped his foot and broke through into the great hollow of practical atheism which under-gulfs the Church and State. Then what a caving in was there! . . . Ecclesiastical quicksand ran down the hole amain. Metropolitan churches toppled and pitched and canted and cracked, their bowed walls all out of plumb. Colleges, broken from the chain which held them in the stream of time, rushed toward the abysmal rent."

And what a passage is this? What homely beauty, what compassion, what pathos are together mingled when Parker speaks of the last sorrowing days of the "great man eloquent," saying that "his great oxen were driven up that he might smell their healthy breath, and look his last into those broad, generous faces that were never false to him."

Such a funeral discourse Boston had never heard before and may never hear again. To this day, it produces admiration, and wonder, and astonishment. Critics have never ceased to carp at it; but, as Parker's biographer has stated, "they have done it little harm." Parker, to be sure, being a State-rights man, never fully appreciated the value of Webster's speeches in the thirties against Hayne and Calhoun, which "stood like a sea-wall" against the hopeless, raging waves of secession in '61; but, as his biographer asserts, "the great essential truths of this discourse by Parker have never been successfully impeached, whether in respect to Webster's private character or public worth."

Historical Background of Parker's Discourse on Webster in Respect to Webster's Seventh of March Speech

From a personal and historical point of view, the speech by Webster on the Seventh of March, 1850, was one of the most important utterances of his life. To him personally, it brought political ruin, and placed upon his reputation as a statesman, and as a great moral leader, a withering blight and stain from which it has never fully recovered. Yet, historically, this speech stands forth as one of his most learned expositions of the Constitution, thoroughly consistent, some say, with all his former utterances, and statesmanlike in its attitude toward the then existing crisis that threatened a disruption of the Union.

His erstwhile admirers branded it, however, as the utterance of a coward and a political charlatan; while his friends insisted that it was the most complete demonstration of his heroic patriotism and unselfish devotion to principle.

For this speech, his severest critics have never ceased to heap reproach upon his name; yet historians believe that, in great measure, his words on this occasion were vindicated by the subsequent course of events; and all agree on this one point, at least, that, by this speech, he helped to postpone for another decade the inevitable horror of an impending civil war.

At the time this speech was delivered, the whole country was torn by violent dissension on the question of slavery. The Mexican War had been terminated; vast territories had been added to the Union; and California was seeking admission to the Union as a free State. The South was thoroughly aroused, however, at the prospect of losing the balance between free and slave States in the Senate. Though it might yield a point in respect to California, it was furious at the ultimate prospect of losing the territory of New Mexico also to freedom; and for such prospective losses, it demanded, under penalty of secession, the most stringent guarantees for the protection of slavery within the original slave States. The chief bone of contention, however, was whether, in exchange for free California and for the abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, the North would consent to the enactment of a *Fugitive Slave Law* that would make every man, woman, and child in the Northern States a potential man-hunter to return into bondage the runaway slaves from the South.

On these related questions, Calhoun delivered his last great speech in the Senate, on March 4, 1850, threatening the Union with secession and civil war unless concessions to the South were immediately forthcoming; and, three days later, Webster replied in his famous speech, advocating a compromise that included the most vicious *Fugitive Slave Law*. To this speech, William H. Seward gave a reply, four days afterward, urging the admission of California, but denouncing the *Fugitive Slave*

Law, with a statement soon to be taken as a rallying-cry throughout the North, that there was "a higher law than the Constitution." Clay then rushed to Webster's defense, and all the Southern Democrats pronounced Seward's utterance to be treason.

Thus, the debates proceeded for months, with the utmost rancor and expressions of unrestrained violence that, at one time, nearly resulted in a duel on the floor of the Senate between Senators Benton of Missouri and Foote of Mississippi. The great champion of compromise throughout all this struggle, however, was Henry Clay of Kentucky; and, in the end, he succeeded in pacifying the country for a brief breathing spell by forcing through Congress one by one his *Compromise Measures of 1850,* including the *Fugitive Slave Law.*

Though many another Senator had spoken eloquently on these *Compromise Measures,* none had created such a sensation as Webster in his *Seventh of March Speech.* The North had expected him to stand as its champion against slavery and it therefore awaited this speech with the confident expectation of a great triumph. Its consternation can hardly be imagined, then, when it heard its great leader advocate no restriction on slavery in New Mexico; when it heard him uphold the *Fugitive Slave Law;* and when finally it heard him denounce the abolition societies of the North for their seditious agitation.

Webster, however, had carefully weighed his words, and he knew this to be one of the most momentous occasions in his long career as a statesman. He hated slavery with his whole heart, and wished to have it excluded from the territories; but he reasoned that natural laws would exclude it from New Mexico as they had from California; and he did not wish to add fuel to the raging passions of the South.

Though he hated slavery, he loved the Union more; and, being confronted with the open threat of secession, he preferred to endure the evil of slavery in order that the Union might be saved. So much, indeed, did he desire to restore the nation to peace, that he consented to plead for a *Fugitive Slave Law* and to denounce the activities of those who were agitating to destroy slavery. Never was a statesman so tried by the ordeal of fire as was Webster on this occasion. Caught between the two horns of an awful dilemma, he chose what he considered the lesser evil, and was thereafter pilloried for his adherence to the principle that had been his guide through life.

No amount of explanation on the part of his friends could restore the faith in him that his former admirers in the anti-slavery movement had long cherished. Henceforth, he was to them a fallen idol, like the great archangel, Lucifer, cast down from the battlements of heaven, down, down, even to the lowest depths, from which he could never hope to rise again. To the great cause of liberty, they said he was a traitor, and many compared his deed to that of Benedict Arnold. Of him, at this time, Whittier wrote the poem *Ichabod,* saying with mournful pathos:

"So fallen! So lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore.
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

"Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim
Dishonored brow.

"But let its humbler sons instead
From sea to lake
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

"Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains;
A fallen angel's pride of thought
Still strong in chains.

"All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled;
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead.

"Then pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward with averted gaze
And hide his shame."

For this great speech, Webster was accused of meanly truckling to the South to obtain its support in his aspirations for the presidency. The South, however, would not accept him as a leader; and much of the North disowned him. He failed to win even a nomination for the presidency; and, crushed by the seeming ingratitude of the people, he soon went down to his home in Marshfield to die. He had saved the Union by his eloquence; yet, in so doing, he had surrendered for it all he had—his brilliant reputation as a statesman, the honor and esteem of long cherished friends, his yearning ambition to be President, and in the end even life itself. Such was the effect of Webster's *Speech of the Seventh of March*—a speech that

had sufficient power to save the Union and to destroy him who made it.

For nearly a generation after Webster's death, his reputation suffered from the diatribes of those who could not forget, and would not forgive, this last great speech. Yet, now, when historians can more calmly weigh the circumstances under which the speech was given, they have come to judge its author with much greater sympathy and with much greater leniency. One of them, in fact, has written recently, that—"If hostile critics may truthfully say that this speech added nothing to a life of otherwise great achievement, it may with equal truth be said that it certainly was not the occasion of any serious or permanent loss to Webster's fame. With it, or without it, the life and speeches of Daniel Webster will be read by all subsequent generations of his countrymen with admiration for his marvelous talents, and with gratitude for his lasting services to the Republic."

Historical Background of Parker's Discourse on Webster—What Anti-Slavery Men were Warranted in Expecting from Webster in 1850

Anti-slavery leaders in the North were made extremely bitter toward Webster in 1850—so extremely bitter in fact that they likened him to Benedict Arnold and the fallen archangels—because, in approving the Clay Compromise of that year, in order to save the Union for which they cared little, he voted for the organization of New Mexico as a Territory without a provision for the exclusion of slavery; because he voted for the enactment of a *Fugitive Slave Law* as a part of the Clay Compromise; and because he condemned the activi-

ties of Abolition societies in the North on the ground that they were stirring up sectional strife.

Whether or not these anti-slavery leaders were justified in regarding Webster as a traitor to their cause; whether or not in fact he had ever committed himself to the ideals that they upheld in 1850, may be judged by a review of Webster's public record on matters pertaining to slavery since the first nation-wide agitation of the slavery question at the time of the Missouri Compromise in 1819 and 1820.

During the time of that great crisis, Webster was not a member of Congress; but, in 1819, he was chairman of a committee, selected to draft a memorial to Congress on behalf of Massachusetts, protesting against slavery and against the admission of Missouri as a slave State; and, in 1820, when he delivered his famous *Plymouth Oration,* he seized that opportunity to express his sentiments strongly in respect to slavery in America and more particularly in respect to the heinous foreign slave-trade.

At that time, he said: "I deem it my duty on this occasion to suggest, that the land is not yet wholly free from the contamination of a traffic, at which every feeling of humanity must forever revolt,—I mean the African slave-trade. Neither public sentiment, nor the law, has hitherto been able entirely to put an end to this odious and abominable trade.

"In the sight of our law, the African slave-trader is a pirate and a felon; and in the sight of Heaven, an offender far beyond the ordinary depth of human guilt.

"There is no brighter page of our history, than that which records the measures which have been adopted by the government at an early day, and at different times since for the suppression of this traffic; and I would call on all the true

sons of New England to co-operate with the laws of man, and the justice of Heaven. If there be within the extent of our knowledge or influence, any participation in this traffic, let us pledge ourselves here, upon the rock of Plymouth, to extirpate and destroy it.

"It is not fit that the land of the Pilgrims should bear the shame longer. I hear the sound of the hammer, I see the smoke of the furnaces where manacles and fetters are still forged for human limbs. I see the visages of those who by stealth and at midnight labor in this work of hell, foul and dark, as may become the artificers of such instruments of misery and torture. Let that spot be purified, or let it cease to be of New England. Let it be purified, or let it be set aside from the Christian world; let it be put out of the circle of human sympathies and human regards, and let civilized man henceforth have no communion with it."

Thus Webster spoke against the enormities of the African slave-trade; and he had no further opportunity to announce his attitude toward slavery until in the debates of Congress in 1826 he had to meet the objections of men like John Randolph to the scheme of John Quincy Adams for joining a Pan-American Congress at Panama. These objections were based on the fact that our representatives would have to sit, side by side, with revolted slaves from the negro republics of Hayti and San Domingo; but Webster chose deliberately to avoid this phase of the argument and to base his defense of the proposition on other grounds.

Webster's next opportunity to speak on the matter of slavery came in 1830, when, during his *Reply to Hayne,* he said: "There is not and never has been a disposition in the North to interfere with these interests of the South. Such interference has never been supposed to be within the power

of government; nor has it been in any way attempted. The slavery of the South has always been regarded as a matter of domestic policy left with the States themselves, and with which the Federal government had nothing to do. Certainly, sir, I am and ever have been of that opinion. The gentleman, indeed, argues that slavery, in the abstract, is no evil. Most assuredly, I need not say I differ with him altogether and most widely on that point. I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest evils, both moral and political."

Six years after Webster made this statement, he was forced to take a stand in the Senate on the right of anti-slavery societies to petition the government for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. On this occasion he denied Calhoun's contention that the Senate should refuse to receive all such petitions; he himself presented three that had come into his hands; but he indignantly denied that he was a leader of the movement from which they originated.

During the next year, however, in 1837, the question came up in a different light with respect to the annexation of Texas; and, on this phase of the problem, as well as on the general question of the morality of slavery and on the advisability of trying to suppress anti-slavery sentiment, Webster spoke out boldly in his famous speech at Niblo's Garden in New York.

At this time he said: "Gentlemen, we all see that, by whomsoever possessed, Texas is likely to be a slave-holding country; and I frankly avow my entire unwillingness to do anything that shall extend the slavery of the African race on this continent or add other slave-holding States to the Union.

"When I say that I regard slavery in itself as a great moral, social, and political evil, I only use language which has been adopted by distinguished men themselves citizens of slave-

holding States. I shall do nothing, therefore, to favor or encourage its extension.

"We have slavery already among us. The Constitution found it in the Union; it recognized it, and gave it solemn guaranties. To the full extent of these guaranties we are all bound, in honor, in justice, and by the Constitution.

"Slavery, as it exists in the States, is beyond the reach of Congress. But when we come to speak of admitting new States, the subject assumes an entirely different aspect. Our rights and our duties are then both different. In my opinion, the people of the United States will not consent to bring into the Union a new, vastly extensive, and slave-holding country, large enough for half a dozen or a dozen States. In my opinion, they ought not to consent to it.

"On the general question of slavery, a great portion of the community is already strongly excited. The subject has not only attracted attention as a question of politics, but it has struck a far deeper-toned chord. It has arrested the religious feeling of the country; it has taken strong hold on the consciences of men. He is a rash man, indeed, and little conversant with human nature, and especially has he a very erroneous estimate of the character of the people of this country, who supposes that a feeling of this kind is to be trifled with or despised. It will assuredly cause itself to be respected. It may be reasoned with, it may be made willing, I believe it is entirely willing, to fulfil all existing engagements and all existing duties, to uphold and defend the Constitution as it is established, with whatever regrets about some provisions which it does actually contain. But to coerce it into silence, to endeavor to restrain its free expression, to seek to compress and confine it, warm as it is, and more heated as such endeavors would inevitably render it,—should this be

attempted, I know nothing, even in the Constitution or in the Union itself, which would not be endangered by the explosion which might follow."

This explosive wrath of the Abolitionists, Webster was made to feel four years later, when, in 1841 and 1842, he, as Secretary-of-State, had to handle the negotiations with Great Britain over the famous *Creole Case,* which arose in this manner: The *Creole* was a slave-ship plying in the coastwise trade between Norfolk and New Orleans. On board were 125 slaves. A number of them mutinied, killed the officers, and steered the ship into the British port of Nassau in the West Indies. For murder on the high seas, nineteen of the blacks were held by the British authorities, but all the others were given their freedom according to the laws of England.

In this case, Webster demanded of England reparation for the property in slaves that the British authorities had willfully refused to put back into the hands of the American slave holders; and, because he made this demand according to his conception of his duty as an executive officer of the whole nation, South as well as North, he was flayed by the Abolition press for moral turpitude.

During the early stages of the Mexican War period, Webster was opposed to the annexation of Texas for the same reasons that he had given in 1837 on the occasion of his speech at Niblo's Garden. He was not a leader in the discussion of the slavery aspect of the War with Mexico; but he did vote for the *Wilmot Proviso* in 1847 to exclude slavery from the acquired territories; and he, in fact, claimed as his own the doctrine contained in the *Proviso,* because it was a mere echo of his sentiments in the speech at Niblo's Garden.

During the next year, however, in 1848, he was brought to speak his mind quite forcibly on the subject of the extension

of slavery into the Territories. The occasion for this utterance was the introduction into the Senate of a bill by Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois for the organization of Oregon as a Territory with the provision in regard to slavery that the line of the Missouri Compromise should be extended to the Pacific, thus leaving all the territory south of that line in New Mexico subject to the introduction of slavery.

On this proposal, Webster said: "I, for one, have made up my mind that under no circumstances will I consent to the further extension of the area of slavery in the United States, or to the further increase of slave representation in the House of Representatives."

This record of Webster's utterances on the subject of slavery is fairly comprehensive. By it, we can judge how much of an anti-slavery man he was at heart; how far he had committed himself irrevocably to insist upon legislation to make New Mexico free; how far he was bound to oppose the *Fugitive Slave Law* in consequence of his attitude toward the foreign slave trade; and whether or not he should have denounced the Abolition societies of the North as threatening the peace of the Union.

Theodore Parker: Discourse on Death of Daniel Webster

October 31, 1852

Do men mourn for him, the great man eloquent? I put on sackcloth long ago. I mourned for him when he wrote the *Creole* letter which surprised Ashburton, Briton that he was. I mourned when he spoke the speech of the Seventh of March. I mourned when the *Fugitive Slave Bill* passed Congress, and the same cannon that had fired "minute guns" for him fired

also one hundred rounds of joy for the forging of a new fetter for the fugitive's foot. I mourned for him, when the kidnappers first came to Boston—hated then—now respectable men, the companions of princes, enlarging their testimony in the courts. I mourned when my own parishioners fled from the "stripes" of New England to the "stars" of Old England. I mourned when Ellen Craft fled to my house for shelter and for succor, and for the first time in all my life, I armed this hand. I mourned when the courthouse was hung in chains, when Thomas Simms, from his dungeon, sent out his petition for prayers and the churches did not dare to pray. I mourned when I married William and Ellen Craft, and gave them a Bible for their soul, and a sword to keep that soul living, and in a living frame. I mourned when the poor outcast in yonder dungeon sent for me to visit him, and, when I took him by the hand that Daniel Webster was chaining in that house. I mourned for Webster when we prayed our prayer and sung our psalm on Long Wharf in the morning's gray. I mourned then, I shall not cease to mourn. The flags will be removed from the streets, the cannons will sound their other notes of joy, but for me I shall go mourning all my days. I shall refuse to be comforted, and at last I shall lay down my gray hairs with weeping and with sorrow in the grave. O, Webster! Webster! would God that I had died for thee!

He was a great man, a man of the largest mould, a great body and a great brain, he seemed made to last a hundred years. Since Socrates there has seldom been a head so massive, so huge—seldom such a face since the stormy features of Michael Angelo—he who sculptured day and night into such beautiful forms,—he looked them in his face before he chiselled them in stone. In the Senate of the United States, he looked an emperor in that council. Even the majestic

Calhoun seemed common compared with him. Clay looked vulgar, and Van Buren but a fox. What a mouth he had! It was a lion's mouth. Yet there was a sweet grandeur in his smile, and a woman's sweetness when he would. What a brow it was! What eyes! like charcoal fire in the bottom of a deep, dark well. His face was rugged with volcanic fires, great passions, and great thoughts.

You remember the last time he spoke in Boston—the procession last summer. You remember it well. What a sad and careworn countenance was that of the old man, welcomed with their mockery of applause! You remember when the orator, wise-headed and friendly hearted, came to thank him for his services, he said not a word of saving the Union, of the compromise measures, not a word; but for his own great services he thanked him.

And when Webster replied, he said: "Here in Boston I am not disowned—at least here I am not disowned." No, Daniel Webster! you were not disowned in Boston. So long as I have a tongue to teach, a heart to feel, you shall never be disowned. It was by our sin, by Boston's sin, that the great man fell! I pity his victims; you pity them too. But I pity him more; oh, far more. Pity the oppressed, will you? Will you not pity the oppressor in his sin?

Look there. See that face, so manly strong, so maiden meek. Hear that voice: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more." Listen to the last words of the crucified: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The last time he was in Faneuil Hall—it was last June, the sick old man—it was Faneuil Hall open; once it had been shut—you remember the feeble look and the sad face. I felt then that it was his last time, and forebore to look upon that saddened countenance. The last time he was in the Senate,

it was to hear his successor speak. He stayed an hour, and heard Charles Sumner demonstrate that the *Fugitive Slave Bill* was not good religion, nor good morality, nor good constitution, nor good law.

He came home to Boston and went down to Marshfield to die. An old man, broken with the storms of state, went home —to die! To him, to die was gain; life was the only loss. His friends were about him; his dear ones—his wife, his son (the last of six children he had loved). Name by name he bade them all farewell, and all his friends, man by man. Two colored servants of his were there—men that he had bought out of slavery and had blessed with freedom and life. They watched over the bedside of the dying man. The kindly doctors thought to sweeten the bitterness of death with medicated skill, and when that failed, he gave the great man a little manna that fell down from heaven three thousand years ago, and the shepherd David gathered it up and kept it in a psalm:—

"The Lord is my shepherd. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

And the great man faltered out his last words: "That is what I want—thy rod, thy rod; thy staff, thy staff." That great heart had never renounced God. Oh, no! It had scoffed at his "higher law," but in the heart of hearts there was religion still!

Just four years after his great speech, on the twenty-fourth of October, the mortal Daniel Webster went down to the dust, and the soul to the motherly bosom of God! Men mourn for him; he heeds it not. He needs not pity. The great man has gone where the servant is free from his master; where the weary are at rest; where the wicked cease from troubling.

Massachusetts has lost her great adopted son. Has lost! Oh, no! "I still live" is truer than the sick man knew.

His memory will long live with us, still dear to many a loving heart.

What honor shall we pay? Let the State go out mindful of his noblest services, yet tearful for his fate, sad that he would fain have filled him with the husks the swine do eat, and no man gave to him. Sad and tearful, let her remember the force of circumstance and dark temptation's secret power. Let her remember that while we know what he yielded to, and what his sin, God knows what also he resisted, and He alone knows who the sinner is. The dear old mother of us all! Oh, let her warn her children to fling away ambition, and let her charge them, every one, that there is a God who must, indeed, be worshipped and a higher law of God which must be kept though gold and Union fail. Then let her say to them: "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain; turn ye and take your journey into the land of Freedom, which the Lord your God giveth you!"

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

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2. John Quincy Adams: *On the Right of Petition* (1837)—See Appletons' *Debates of Congress* XIII, 270, 283-289; Seward's *Life of John Quincy Adams,* 288-290.
3. Wendell Phillips: *The Murder of Lovejoy* (1837)—See Phillips's *Speeches, Lectures, Letters* (1863), 1-10; Johnston and Woodburn II, 102-114; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) VIII, 222-230.
4. William H. Seward: *Defense of William Freeman* (1846)—See Snyder's *Great Speeches by Great Lawyers* (1881), 149-190.

5. Charles Sumner: *White Slavery in the Barbary States* (1847)—See Sumner's *Orations and Speeches* (1850); also complete works of Sumner (15 vols. 1870-1883).
6. William H. Seward: *Eulogy of John Quincy Adams* (1848)—See *Works of William H. Seward;* also Seward's *Life of J. Q. Adams* (1849), 357-404.
7. Theodore Parker: *Eulogy of J. Q. Adams* (1848)—See Parker's *Speeches, Addresses, and Occasional Sermons* (1867).

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2. Webster: *The Panama Mission* (1826)—See *Works of Webster,* III, 178-217.
3. Webster: *Reply to Hayne* (1830)—See *Works of Webster,* III, 270-342.
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7. Theodore Parker: *Discourse on the Death of Daniel Webster* (1852)—See Parker's *Speeches, Addresses, and Occasional Sermons* (1867) I, 131-293; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) VIII, 274-279 (abridged).

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Greeley's *The American Conflict;* McMaster's *History of the People of U. S.;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Smith's *Political History of Slavery;* Von Holst's *Constitutional and Political History;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Adams, John Quincy—See biographies by Seward, and Morse.

Calhoun, John C.—See biographies by Jenkins, Von Holst, Pinckney, and Hunt.

Clay, Henry—See biographies by Colton, Schurz, Hart, and T. H. Clay.

Parker, Theodore—See biographies by Weiss, Frothingham, and Chadwick.

Phillips, Wendell—See biographies by Austin, Martyn, and Sears.

Seward, William H.—See biographies by Bancroft, Baker, Welles, Lothrop, and Hale.

Sumner, Charles—See biographies by Chaplin and Chaplin, Grimke, Dawes, Storey, and Haynes.

Webster, Daniel—See biographies by Curtis, Lodge, McMaster, and Ogg.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Parker's *Discourse on Death of Daniel Webster*

I. What internal evidence is there that Parker was familiar with: (1) Milton's *Sonnet to Lady Margaret Ley,* line 8; (2) *Genesis,* 42:38; 44:31 (3) *Second Samuel,* 18:33; (4) *John,* 8:11; (5) *Luke,* 23:34; (6) *Psalm,* 23; (7) *Exodus,* 16:4; 16:15; (8) *Job,* 3:17-19; (9) *Luke,* 15:16; (10) *Deuteronomy,* 1:6-7; (11) Shakespeare's *Henry VIII,* Act III, Scene 2, (Wolsey to Cromwell)?

II. What is meant by the expressions: (1) sackcloth; (2) "minute guns"; (3) the kidnappers; (4) the "stripes" of New England, and the "stars" of Old England; (5) manna; (6) fling away ambition; (7) though gold and union fail?

III. Who were: (1) Ashburton; (2) Thomas Simms; (3) William and Ellen Craft—See Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America,* II, 325-337; (4) the poor outcast in yonder dungeon; (5) Socrates; (6) Michael Angelo?

IV. Where were the statues of Day and Night as sculptured by Michael Angelo?

V. What were: (1) the *Creole* incident; (2) the name of the great speech delivered by Webster in 1848?

VI. When were: (1) Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and Van Buren all in the Senate together; (2) Faneuil Hall closed to Webster—See Wilson, II, 275; (3) the last time Webster was in the Senate?—See date of Sumner's speech, *Freedom National, Slavery Sectional.*

VII. What implied reference does Parker make to: (1) Lord Mansfield's decision in the *Somerset Case* in 1772; (2) the doctrine of Seward's speech on March 11, 1850?

VIII. What justification had Parker for saying that it was by Boston's sin that the great man fell?

Dictionary Studies from Theodore Parker

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. bade 2. bosom 3. enlarging 4. fain 5. manna 6. medicated 7. neither 8. mountain 9. sackcloth 10. scoffed 11. succor.

CHAPTER X

RUFUS CHOATE

Choate's Place Among the Great Jury-Orators of America

Rufus Choate is generally recognized to be the most distinguished jury-orator of America. That his fame for eloquence is not so great among all classes of people, as that of Webster, or Clay, or Sumner, or Phillips, is due to the fact that he was pre-eminently a lawyer and that his reputation rests primarily upon his eloquence in the courts, while the reputation of these great contemporary orators was built up largely upon their performances as political and platform speakers whose themes touched upon the main current of events in political history.

If the oratory of any man is to give him permanent fame among all classes, then it had better be of that variety which is heard in Congress, in nominating conventions, on the stump, or from the platform on commemorative occasions of great historic importance. Compared with the oratory heard on such occasions, the eloquence of the clergy in their regular sermonizing or of the barristers in their regular practice, no matter how thrilling it may be to the immediate listeners, is likely to disappear with the occasion that calls it forth and to be lost from the memories of the general public in succeeding generations.

Such was the fate of most of the eloquence produced by Choate in his brilliant career as a jury-orator. Most of his

speeches have utterly disappeared and only the tradition of his amazing eloquence in court has been preserved.

But this tradition among members of his profession is still as strong as when he held his auditors spell-bound in the court-room, and it preserves his name as the greatest jury-orator of all times in America, whether it is compared with the names of those who preceded him at the bar or with the names of those who have come after him.

The period of his activity in his profession extended from 1823 down to his death in 1859; and this period, like the one that preceded it and the one that followed, was crowded with the names of those who had risen to the greatest eminence as jury-orators in the courts of the nation.

Just before the time of Rufus Choate, the great jury-orators of America, who had won such fame as barristers may, were Luther Martin of Maryland, who won distinction among the counsel for the defense in the impeachment proceedings against Judge Chase in 1805, and again as he appeared among the attorneys for the defense at the trial of Aaron Burr, in 1807; Thomas Addis Emmet, a brother of the Irish patriot, Robert Emmet, and himself a political exile from Ireland, who came to America in 1804 and rose to be Attorney-General of New York State under Governor Clinton; William Wirt of Virginia, who appeared for the prosecution in the trial of Aaron Burr and who became Attoney-General under Monroe; William Pinkney of Maryland, who won fame in the *Defense of John Hodges* and in the *Case of the Nereide* in 1815, after he had been Attorney-General under Madison; and Daniel Webster, whose fame as a jury-orator rests largely upon his *Defense of the Kennistons* in 1817 and upon his later triumph in the *White Murder Case* of 1830.

Many and great were the jury-orators of America who were

active during the period of Choate's pre-eminence at the bar; but most conspicuous among them were Seargent S. Prentiss of Mississippi, a native of Maine and an adopted son of the South, who, in 1839, conducted his memorable *Defense of Judge Wilkinson* on a charge of murder in Harrodsburg, Kentucky; David Paul Brown of Philadelphia, who, in 1842, delivered his famous plea in *Defense of Alexander William Holmes* on a charge of manslaughter on the high seas; and William H. Seward of Auburn, New York, who, in 1846, heroically defended the demented negro, William Freeman, on a charge of having murdered a whole family of unsuspecting and unoffending farm-dwellers.

If Rufus Choate were compared only with such great leaders of the American bar, his claim to eminence as a jury-orator would not be insubstantial; but his reputation for pre-eminence was built undoubtedly upon comparison with those also who followed immediately after him; such as, for example, with Edwin M. Stanton, of Lincoln's cabinet, who won fame in 1859 for his *Defense of Daniel Sickles;* with James T. Brady, of New York, who, in 1861, defended the Savannah Privateers on a charge of piracy; and with William M. Evarts, of New York, who was the prosecuting attorney in the same case, who was the chief counsel for the defense in the impeachment of Andrew Johnson in 1868, and who defended America's claims before the Geneva Tribunal of Arbitration in 1872.

Whether Rufus Choate was ever excelled in genius by jury-orators of still later times, like Robert G. Ingersoll, for example, or Joseph H. Choate, is open to conjecture; but certain it is, that, among the legal profession, he has held for generations, and perhaps may always hold, the reputation of being the foremost jury-orator of America.

The Life of Rufus Choate

Rufus Choate, the most renowned advocate of the American bar, bears a name that will forever be associated with that of Webster. He was Webster's greatest rival in the courts; and, yet, at the same time, he was Webster's most intimate personal friend and most faithful political disciple. When Webster retired from the Senate in 1841, it was Choate who filled out his unexpired term; when Webster was to be nominated for the presidency in 1852, it was Choate who presented his name to the national Whig convention; and when, in death, Webster's name was loaded with reproach and bitter calumny, it was Choate who became his most able defender and brilliant eulogist.

Though Choate was by far the most noted advocate of his times, he will be remembered, not merely as an orator before the courts, but also as an eloquent Whig spokesman in Congress, and, during his later life, as one of the most scholarly, and most popular, of the many platform-orators, who appeared during the golden age of Lyceum eloquence—rivaling even Edward Everett in the splendor of his gorgeous rhetoric, and Wendell Phillips in the charm of his magnetic personality.

Choate was born at Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1799, and, after a most precocious childhood, was sent over the line into New Hampshire for his education; first, in the academy at Hampton, and then at Dartmouth College, where he was graduated as valedictorian of his class, in 1819.

In that day, Dartmouth College was, indeed, "a small college," or rather two colleges, one of them "without buildings, without libraries, without apparatus, and without resources," torn by litigation, and involved in the great suit, known as the *Dartmouth College Case,* which cast its shadow upon every

educational institution in the land, and finally came before the Supreme Court at Washington for adjudication.

Choate, as a student, followed the progress of this case through the State courts, watching with admiration the great efforts put forth on either side by the most eminent lawyers of New England; and, finally when he had heard the glowing reports of Webster's eloquence on behalf of the old college before the Supreme Court of the nation—reports that told of the manner in which Webster brought tears to the eyes of Chief Justice Marshall—Choate, himself, decided to emulate the example of this great son of his cherished Alma Mater.

For one year following his graduation, Choate was engaged as a tutor at Dartmouth. The next year he began the study of law at the Cambridge Law School, but afterwards he finished his legal studies in the office of William Wirt, the Attorney-General of the United States, at Washington.

He began his practice in Danvers, near Salem, Massachusetts, and, in his first case, laid the foundations for his future reputation as a forensic orator. "There had been giants among us," said a contemporary writer, "some of national fame and standing, but no such giant as this had appeared before at the Essex bar—such words, such epithets, such involutions, such close and powerful logic all the while, such grace and dignity, such profusion and waste of everything beautiful and lovely. No, not waste; he never wasted a word. It was a new school of rhetoric, oratory, and logic, and of all manner of diverse forces working steadily and irresistibly in one direction to accomplish the speaker's purpose and object."

After seven years of successful practice at the bar, he was elected in 1830 as a Representative in Congress, and there, during two terms acquired an enviable reputation as a speaker, especially by his speech on the tariff, which, though "begun to a house almost empty, brought members from lobbies and com-

mittee rooms by the charm of its irresistible persuasiveness until the hall was filled. He closed amidst the enthusiasm of his hearers, and his position as a parliamentary orator was established."

Describing one of his later speeches in the House, an old veteran in politics from Kentucky said: "In accordance with my custom, I took my hat to leave, lingering a moment just to notice the tone of his voice and the manner of his speech. But that moment was fatal to my resolution. I became charmed by the music of his voice and was captivated by the power of his eloquence, and found myself wholly unable to move until the last word of his beautiful speech had been uttered."

Though Choate might have remained indefinitely in Congress, he preferred to devote all his energies to the practice of his profession; and, hence, in 1834, he retired from public life, and year after year, in Boston, added to his fame as an advocate before the courts.

When Webster resigned his position in the Senate, in 1841, to become Secretary-of-State, Choate was the most eminent lawyer of Massachusetts; and, accordingly, he was requisitioned to fill Webster's place as Senator for the four remaining years of his term.

Once more, at the national capital, Choate showed himself worthy to fill the illustrious place left vacant by his predecessor, and "in less than a month was receiving warm commendations from all parties for his defense of the government's policy in the then famous *McLeod Case,* involving complications with Great Britain."

On several occasions, he displayed in his speeches before the Senate, the highest qualities of statesmanship, but in none perhaps was there a more rare combination of statesmanship and eloquence than in his speech on *The Occupation of Ore-*

gon, delivered, in 1844, as a protest against the jingo spirit of patriotism that sought to perpetuate an "hereditary hatred" for Great Britain as our former enemy in the Revolution and in the War of 1812.

At the same time that Choate was thus building up his reputation as a parliamentary orator, he was also starting on his rise to fame as a brilliant and scholarly orator for special occasions. His *Eulogy of President Harrison,* in 1841, at Faneuil Hall, was received as a most sincere and eloquent tribute to the dead chieftain. It was far surpassed, however, by his later utterances, including the platform lecture on *The Eloquence of Revolutionary Periods,* and his two eulogies of Webster, one delivered before the Suffolk County Bar in 1852, and the other at Dartmouth College in the following year. This second eulogy of Webster is justly regarded as one of the world's greatest masterpieces in the realm of commemorative oratory.

From the time that Choate retired from the Senate, he seldom appeared as a political orator. Yet, now and then, the Whig party commandeered his services; and, on all such occasions, he spoke eloquently to support their measures and their candidates. One such compelling speech, he delivered in Tremont Temple before a mass-meeting in 1845, denouncing the annexation of Texas; and many another plea he made for the candidacy of Webster in the Whig national convention of 1852. With the spread of anti-slavery sentiment, and the consequent disruption of the Whig party, Choate felt himself drawn more and more to the policy of nationalism that survived only in the Democratic party; and, accordingly, he labored for the election of Buchanan in 1856, and continued to support the Democratic party until his death in 1859.

Whatever praise is justly due to Choate as a deliberative and platform orator, he will be remembered, nevertheless, throughout all times, as the most celebrated orator of the courts in America. Wendell Phillips, who harbored a burning prejudice against him, as he did also against Everett, and Webster, and even Lincoln, because they were not rabid abolitionists, has left on record this tribute to his genius, if not to his character: "There is Choate," said he, "for whose health thieves inquire, before they break through to steal."

Never has there appeared in America a more consummate master of the art of winning juries; yet Choate's oratory in the courts, like all his eloquence, was such as in most instances would be frowned upon by hard-headed lawyers and juries. Mathews says of him that "probably no orator ever lived who threw himself with more energy and utter abandon into the advocacy of a cause"; and Wendell Phillips says of him disparagingly that "his gestures resembled a monkey in convulsions." Throughout each trial, however, according to another authority, he is said to have "watched his jury as a hawk its prey. His eye and the tones of his voice fascinated them. He could read their thoughts and know when he had won them, and would not close his argument and appeal, until he was morally certain of every juryman. Once he labored three hours with the stubborn foreman of a jury, though the rest had been won long before. Often when he was through with his plea, he had to be assisted to his carriage."

No orator since Choate has ever been able to master or imitate his style, which has been described as cumulative in its argument and overwhelming in its appeal, sparkling with wit, and richly laden with literary and classical allusions. At times, his sentences were simple, direct, and terse; but, at

other times, he led his listeners through mazes of interminable periods, which, in the most noteworthy instance gave to the world a sentence rivaling even the longest of Kant's, the philosopher, stretching out over page after page, until, at its well-rounded end, it had rolled into a perfect structure not less than twelve hundred words. Before such sentences, delivered with a speed and fervor seldom equalled, it is no wonder that court-reporters simply sat back in despair, and protested that they could not report "chain-lightning."

In Edward Everett's *Eulogy of Choate,* this great contemporary orator said of his dead friend, that he "does not deal exclusively in those ponderous sentences, however. There is nothing of the artificial, Johnsonion balance in his style. It is as often marked by a pungent brevity as by a sonorous amplitude. He is sometimes satisfied, in concise epigrammatic clauses, to skirmish with his light troops and drive in the enemy's outposts. It is only on fitting occasions when great principles are to be vindicated and solemn truths told, when some moral or political Waterloo or Solferino is to be fought, —that he puts on the entire panoply of his gorgeous rhetoric. It is then that his majestic sentences swell to the dimensions of his thought,—that you hear afar off the awful roar of his rifled ordinance, and—when he has stormed the heights and broken the center and trampled the squares and turned the staggering wing of his adversary,—that he sounds his imperial clarion along the whole line of battle, and moves forward with all his hosts in one overwhelming charge."

By such eloquence as this, Rufus Choate has come to be regarded as one of America's greatest orators, brilliant and scholarly on the academic or popular platform, pleasing and persuasive in deliberative assemblies, but overwhelming and irresistible before a jury in the court. For generations after

his death, he will be remembered, therefore, as Lord Erskine, his great contemporary, is in England—by common consent, the most celebrated advocate of the American bar.

Historical Setting of Choate's Eulogy of Webster

Choate's *Eulogy of Webster,* delivered at Dartmouth College in the old white church on July 27, 1853, is justly described by competent critics as "one of the greatest intellectual efforts of man." Edward Everett, in fact, has said of it that "there is nothing greater in the English tongue." Like the lament of David for Jonathan; like the lament of Tennyson for his friend, Hallam, in the poem entitled *In Memoriam;* this eulogy by Choate, in lamentation for Webster, is given a place among the masterpieces of the world's literature, as one of the grandest threnodies of English speech, and as "the supreme threnody of English prose."

Many another eulogy had been pronounced on Webster in the nine months' interval that occurred between his death and the commemorative exercises held for him at Dartmouth College during the commencement season of 1853; and, among these eulogies, were the *Remarks on Webster* by Choate given in behalf of the Suffolk Bar before the Federal Circuit Court of Massachusetts, on October 28, 1852, which served as the basis for almost every subsequent discourse on the same theme, and the magnificent and unprecedented *Discourse on the Death of Webster,* delivered by Theodore Parker in the Melodeon Theater, Boston, on October 31, 1852, which like a great chant, resembled nothing so much as David's lament for the death of his rebellious son, Absalom, borrowing the theme of Whittier's poem, *Ichabod,* and receiving inspiration from Browning's poem entitled *The Lost Leader;* but among all

these eulogies, delivered everywhere throughout the land, that of Choate at Dartmouth is the most memorable for its sympathetic touch, its comprehensive grasp, its able defense, its scholarly treatment, and its mournful eloquence in setting forth the life and moral grandeur of its subject.

That Dartmouth College should turn to Choate to express its sorrow and its reverence for Webster on this great occasion was not in the least strange or remarkable; for, among all the men prominent in public life, none knew Webster better, and none loved him more deeply or respected him more highly. To Choate, Webster had been a life-long idol, the inspiration of his youth, his rival at the bar, his guide in statecraft, his predecessor in the Senate, his nominee for the presidency, his colleague, and his friend. Both, too, were sons of the same Alma Mater, the one only less distinguished than the other; and, hence, it was as if the cherished mother had called upon the younger of her two brilliant sons to express their common sorrow for the death of the elder, the first-born, and the most beloved.

The invitation to deliver the discourse on Webster came to Choate many months before the occasion of its delivery, during one of the busiest years of Choate's professional career, when he was engaged in the unaccustomed duties of the Attorney-General of Massachusetts, and when he was at the same time engaged as one of the most conspicuous leaders of the deliberations in the convention for revising the State constitution. With all the manifold duties of these two positions, he had hardly a moment to devote to preparation for his great task; and, early in July, he himself said that he had thought of writing to be excused from this engagement, and that, if he saw it through, he would thank his friends not to be present at his performance.

On two fleeting occasions, he did prepare himself, however, in a most characteristic way, for his memorable address, once by seeking inspiration among the scenes of Webster's youth at college, and once amid the scenes where the great man breathed his last. On a hurried business trip to Montreal in April, Choate dropped off at Hanover for a day, and there shut himself up for a single hour in the solitary seclusion of the college library to commune with the spirit of his departed friend; and, then, a day or two before the great occasion of his speech, he betook himself to Marshfield where again he might see the home that Webster so dearly loved, the chamber where he died, and the grave in which they laid him.

From these two visits in places hallowed by the memory of the great departed, Choate drew his inspiration for the opening and the closing parts of his discourse; when he said that "it would be a strange neglect of custom, if the college, in which the intellectual life of Webster began, should give no formal expression to her grief in the common sorrow"; and when, in ending, he said that "men will repair thither as they are wont to commemorate the great days of history; and the same glance shall take in, and the same emotions shall greet and bless, the Harbor of the Pilgrims, and the tomb of Webster."

When, at last, the great day came for the commemoration exercises, such a crowd had assembled in Hanover as the little hill-town had never seen, gathered from every corner of New England and from States still farther distant. As was customary, a procession formed at Dartmouth Hall and marched across the campus between the double lines of Seniors to the old church; but, almost before the dignitaries had entered the place of worship, the crowd had broken through the students' lines and stampeded into the auditorium. People who could not enter climbed to the church windows from out-

side and hundreds were left upon the campus to hear the orator's words as they were reported piece-meal by those who stood nearer the church edifice.

Such was the occasion when Choate delivered this great masterpiece. Those who came at this time, however, to see Choate, the great lawyer, famed for his peculiar and inimitable style of jury eloquence, overflowing with wit and accompanied by the most energetic and meaningful gestures, were doomed to disappointment; for there, before them, stood, not Choate the lawyer, but Choate the profound scholar, the deep thinker, the great philosopher, calm, quiet, self-possessed, and introspective, without a trace of wit, and almost without the simulation of gesture, as forceful in his dignified reserve as ever was that greatest master of conversational platform speaking, Wendell Phillips, himself.

Placing his thick manuscript upon a table that stood back of him on the pulpit platform, Choate stepped out into full view of his audience, and there, for three hours, without reference to his manuscript, except when he read a letter from Professor Goodrich of Yale, describing Webster's eloquence in the *Dartmouth College Case,* he poured forth with almost literal accuracy all those tremendous periods contained in his manuscript that have since become the marvel and the admiration of literary critics.

With an eloquence of the platform, that, like his jury eloquence, can hardly be imitated, Choate held his highly critical audience enthralled, while he spoke on and on of Webster as a man upon whom the college and its environment had placed its stamp; while he spoke of the influences that moulded the youth of Webster; while he spoke of that singular eminence which Webster attained as the first of American lawyers, and as the first of American statesmen; while he spoke of Web-

ster's extraordinary intellectual powers, his broad culture, and his profound learning; while he touched tenderly upon his love of man and his love of nature; while he traced to its source the power of Webster's astounding eloquence; while he undertook to defend the moral character of Webster from reproaches that had been cast upon it; and at last while he drew his listeners near to him, as if about the grave of the departed, there to behold Webster "all habited as when

'His look drew audience still as night
Or summer's noontide air,'

till the heavens be no more."

"There, at the old home in Marshfield, among the books of Webster's library, among the fruits of his gardens, among the implements of his husbandry, by the seat under the noble elm where he could feel the southwest wind at evening, or hear the breathings of the sea, or the not less audible music of the starry heavens"—there, amid these scenes of his life, Choate saw that all about him seemed to take on the aspect of one great monument inscribed with the name of Webster, and sacred to his memory. "And such," said he, "it shall be in all the future of America! . . . . Men will repair thither . . . . and the same emotions shall greet and bless, the Harbor of the Pilgrims, and the tomb of Webster."

The great discourse, at last, was finished; and men who had been crowded into the church, where there was scarcely breathing space, soon realized, that, for three hours, they had been held utterly spell-bound by the magic periods of this melancholy, dark-skinned, curly-headed wizard, the greatest of American jury-lawyers, who, that day, on the platform, in their presence, had given, for all to admire, "one of the greatest literary and oratorical performances in the history of man."

Rufus Choate: Eulogy of Webster at Dartmouth July 27, 1853

I. The Exordium—Dartmouth the Fountain Head of Webster's Eminence

It would be a strange neglect of a beautiful and approved custom of the schools of learning, and of one of the most pious and appropriate of the offices of literature, if the college in which the intellectual life of Daniel Webster began, and to which his name imparts charm and illustration, should give no formal expression to her grief in the common sorrow; if she should not draw near, of the most sad, in the procession of the bereaved, to the tomb at the sea, nor find, in all her classic shades, one affectionate and grateful leaf to set in the garland with which they have bound the brow of her child, the mightiest departed. Others mourn and praise him by his more distant and more general titles to fame and remembrance; his supremacy of intellect, his statesmanship of so many years, his eloquence of reason and of heart, his love of country, incorruptible, conscientious, and ruling every hour and act; that greatness combined of genius, of character, of manner, of place, of achievement, which was just now among us, and is not, and yet lives still and ever more. You come, his cherished mother, to own a closer tie, to indulge an emotion more personal and more fond,—grief and exultation contending for mastery, as in the bosom of the desolated parent, whose tears could not hinder him from exclaiming, "I would not exchange my dead son for any living one of Christendom."

Many places in our American world have spoken his eulogy. To all places the service was befitting, for "his renown, is it not of the treasures of the whole country?" To some it be-

longed, with a strong local propriety, to discharge it. In the halls of Congress, where the majestic form seems ever to stand, and the deep tones to linger, the decorated scene of his larger labors and most diffusive glory; in the courts of law, to whose gladsome light he loved to return,—putting on again the robes of that profession ancient as magistracy, noble as virtue, necessary as justice,—in which he found the beginning of his honors; in Faneuil Hall, whose air breathes and burns of him; in the commercial cities, to whose pursuits his diplomacy secured a peaceful sea; in the cities of the inland, around which his capacious public affections, and wise discernment, aimed ever to develop the uncounted resources of that other, and that larger, and that newer America; in the pulpit, whose place among the higher influences which exalt a state, our guide in life, our consolation in death, he appreciated profoundly, and vindicated by the weightiest argument and testimony, of whose offices it is among the fittest to mark and point the moral of the great things of the world, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power passing away as the pride of the wave,—passing from our eye to take on immortality,—in these places, and such as these, there seemed a reason beyond, and other, than the universal calamity, for such honors of the grave. But if so, how fit a place is this for such a service!

We are among the scenes where the youth of Webster awoke first and fully to the life of the mind. We stand, as it were, at the sources—physical, social, moral, intellectual—of that exceeding greatness. Some now here saw that youth; almost it was yours, *Nilum parvum videre*. Some, one of his instructors certainly, some possibly of his classmates, or nearest college friends, some of the books he read, some of the apartments in which he studied are here. We can almost call up

from their habitation in the past, or in the fancy, the whole spiritual circle which environed that time of his life; the opinions he had embraced; the theories of mind, of religion, of morals, of philosophy, to which he had surrendered himself; the canons of taste and criticism which he had accepted; the great authors whom he loved best; the trophies which began to disturb his sleep; the facts of history which he had learned, believed, and begun to interpret; the shapes of hope and fear in which imagination began to bring before him the good and evil of the future.

Still the same outward world is around you, and above you. The sweet and solemn flow of the river, gleaming through interval here and there; margins and samples of the same old woods, but thinned and retiring; the same range of green hills yonder, tolerant of culture to the top, but shaded then by primeval forests, on whose crest the last rays of sunset lingered; the summit of Ascutney; the great northern light that never sets; the constellations that walk around and watch the pole; the same nature, undecayed, unchanging, is here. We stand at the fountain of a stream; we stand, rather, at the place where a stream, sudden, and from hidden springs, bursts to light; and whence we can follow it along and down, as we might our own Connecticut, and trace its resplendent pathway to the sea; and we venerate, and would almost build altars here.

If I may adopt the lofty language of one of the admirers of William Pitt, we come naturally to this place, as if we could thus recall every circumstance of splendid preparation which contributed to fit the great man for the scene of his glory. We could come, as if, better here than elsewhere, "we could watch, fold by fold, the bracing on of his Vulcanian panoply, and observe with pleased anxiety the leading forth of that

chariot, which, borne on irresistible wheels, and drawn by steeds of immortal race, is to crush the necks of the mighty, and sweep away the serried strength of armies."

II. The Double Eminence of Webster in Law and Statesmanship

In coming to consider what Webster became and achieved, I have always thought it was not easy to lay too much stress, in the first place, on that realization of what might have been regarded incompatible forms of superiority, and that exemplification of what might have been regarded incompatible gifts or acquirements—"rare in their separate excellence, wonderful in their special combination"—which meet us in him everywhere. Remark, first, that eminence—rare, if not unprecedented—of the first rate, in the two substantially distinct and unkindred professions,—that of the law, and that of public life. In surveying that ultimate and finished greatness in which he stands before you in his full stature and at his best, this double and blended eminence is the first thing that fixes the eye, and the last. When he died, he was the first of American lawyers, and the first of American statesmen.

In both characters he continued—discharging the foremost part in each—down to the falling of the awful curtain. Both characters he kept distinct,—the habits of mind, the forms of reasoning, the nature of proofs, the style of eloquence. Neither hurt nor changed the other. How much his understanding was "quickened and invigorated" by the law, I have often heard him acknowledge and explain. But how, in spite of the law, was that mind, by other felicity and other culture, "opened and liberalized" also! How few of what are called the bad intellectual habits of the bar he carried into the duties of

statesmanship! His interpretations of the Constitution and of treaties; his exposition of public law—how little do you find in them, where, if anywhere, you would expect it, of the mere ingenuity, the moving of "vermiculate questions," the word-catching, the scholastic subtlety which, in the phrase of his memorable quotation,

"Can sever and divide
A hair 'twixt north and north-west side,"—

ascribed by satire to the profession; and how much of its truer function, and nobler power of calling history, language, the moral sentiments, reasons, common sense, the high spirit of magnanimous nationality, to the search of truth!

And while the lawyer did not hurt the statesman, the statesman did not hurt the lawyer. More; the statesman did not modify; did not unrobe; did not tinge, the lawyer. I could never detect that in his discussions of law he did not just as much recognize authority, just as anxiously seek for adjudications old and new in his favor, just as closely sift and collate them, that he might bring them to his side if he could, or leave them ambiguous and harmless if he could not; that he did not just as rigorously observe the peculiar mode which that science employs in passing from the known to the unknown, the peculiar logic of the law, as if he had never investigated any other than legal truth by any other organon than legal logic in his life.

I have said that this double eminence is rare, if not unprecedented. We do no justice to Mr. Webster, if we do not keep this ever in mind. How many exemplifications of it do you find in British public life? The Earl of Chatham, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Pitt, Grattan, Canning, Peel—were they also, or any one, the acknowledged leader in Westminster Hall or on the circuit? And, on the other hand, would you say that

the mere parliamentary career of Mansfield, or Thurlow, or Dunning, or Erskine, or Camden, or Curran, would compare in duration; constancy, the variety of effort, the range of topics discussed; the fullness, extent, and affluence of the discussion; the influence exerted, the space filled, the senatorial character completely realized—with his? In our own public life it is easier to find a parallel. Great names crowd on us in each department; greater, or more loved, or more venerable, no annals can show. But how few even here have gathered the double wreath and the blended fame!

III. The Extraordinary Power of Webster's Eloquence

The power of Webster to influence the convictions of others by speech was most extraordinary; and here, again, I begin, by admiring an aggregate, made up of excellencies and triumphs ordinarily deemed incompatible. He spoke with consummate ability to the bench, and yet exactly as, according to every sound canon of taste and ethics, the bench ought to be addressed. He spoke with consummate ability to the jury, and yet exactly as, according to every sound canon, that totally different tribunal ought to be addressed. In the halls of Congress, before the people assembled for political discussion in masses, before audiences smaller and more select, assembled for some solemn commemoration of the past or of the dead—in each of these again, his speech, of the first form of ability, was exactly adapted, also, to the critical proprieties of the place; each achieved, when delivered, the most instant and specific success of eloquence,—some of them in a splendid and remarkable degree; and yet, stranger still, when reduced to writing, as they fell from his lips, they compose a body of reading,—in many volumes,—solid, clear, rich, and full of harmony,—a classical and permanent political literature.

And yet all these modes of his eloquence, exactly adapted each to its stage and its end, were stamped with his image and superscription, identified by characteristics incapable to be counterfeited, and impossible to be mistaken. The same high power of reason, intent in every one to explore and display some truth; some truth of judicial, or historical, biographical fact; some truth of law deduced by construction, perhaps, or by illation; some truth of policy, for want whereof, a nation, generations, may be the worse,—reason seeking and unfolding truth; the same tone in all of deep earnestness, expressive of strong desire that that which he felt to be important should be accepted as true, and spring up to action; the same transparent, plain, forcible, and direct speech, conveying his exact thought to the mind,—not something less or more; the sovereignty of form, of brow, of eye, and tone, and manner,—everywhere the intellectual king of men, standing before you, —that same marvellousness of qualities and results, residing, I know not where, in words, in pictures, in the ordering of ideas, in felicities indescribable, by means whereof coming from his tongue, all things seemed mended,—truth seemed more true, probability more plausible, greatness more grand, goodness more awful, every affection more tender, than when coming from other tongues,—these are, in all, his eloquence.

But sometimes it became individualized and discriminated even from itself; sometimes place and circumstances, great interests at stake, a stage, an audience fitted for the highest historic action, a crisis, personal or national, upon him, stirred the depths of that emotional nature, as the anger of the goddess stirs the seas on which the great epic is beginning; strong passions, themselves kindled to intensity, quickened every faculty to a new life; the stimulated associations of ideas brought all treasures of thought and knowledge within com-

mand; the spell, which often held his imagination fast, dissolved, and she arose and gave him to choose of her urn of gold; earnestness became vehemence; the simple, perspicuous, measured, and direct language became a headlong, full, and burning tide of speech; the discourse of reason, wisdom, gravity, and beauty, changed to that Δεινότης, that rarest, consummate eloquence,—grand, rapid, pathetic, terrible; the *aliquid immensum infinitumque* that Cicero might have recognized; the master triumph of man in the rarest opportunity of his noblest power.

Such elevation above himself, in congressional debate, was most uncommon. Some such there were in the great discussions of executive power following the removal of the deposits, which they who heard them will never forget, and some which rest in the tradition of hearers only. But there were other fields of oratory on which, under the influence of more uncommon springs of inspiration, he exemplified, in still other forms, an eloquence in which I do not know that he has had a superior among men. Addressing masses by ten of thousands in the open air, on the urgent political questions of the day, or designated to lead the meditations of an hour devoted to the remembrance of some national era, or of some incident marking the progress of the nation, and lifting him up to a view of what is, and what is past, and some indistinct revelation of the glory that lies in the future, or of some great historical name, just borne by the nation to his tomb,—we have learned that then and there, at the base of Bunker Hill, before the corner-stone was laid, and again when from the finished column the centuries looked on him; in Faneuil Hall, mourning for those whose spoken or written eloquence of freedom its arches had so often resounded; on the rock of Plymouth; before the Capitol, of which there shall not be one

stone left on another, before his name shall have ceased to live,—in such scenes, unfettered by the laws of forensic or parliamentary debate; multitudes uncounted lifting up their eyes to him; some great historical scenes of America around; all symbols of her glory and art and power and fortune there; voices of the past, not unheard; shapes beckoning from the future, not unseen,—sometimes that mighty intellect, borne upwards to a height and kindled to an illumination which we shall see no more, wrought out, as it were, in an instant, a picture of vision, warning, prediction; the progress of the nation; the contrasts of its eras; the heroic deaths; the motives of patriotism; the maxims and arts imperial by which the glory has been gathered and may be heightened,—wrought out, in an instant, a picture to fade only when all record of our mind shall die.

IV. Webster the Orator of a New National Consciousness

In looking over the public remains of the oratory of Webster, it is striking to remark how, even in that sober and massive understanding and nature, you see gathered and expressed the characteristic sentiments and the passing time of our America. It is the strong old oak which ascends before you; yet our soil, our heaven, are attested in it as perfectly as if it were a flower that could grow in no other climate and in no other hour of the year or day. Let me instance in one thing only. It is a peculiarity of some schools of eloquence that they embody and utter, not merely the individual genius and character of the speaker, but a national consciousness—a national era, a mood, a hope, a dread, a despair—in which you listen to the spoken history of the time. There is an eloquence of an expiring nation, such as seems to sadden the

glorious speech of Demosthenes; such as breathes grand and gloomy from the visions of the prophets of the last days of Israel and Judah; such as gave a spell to the expression of Grattan and of Kossuth—the sweetest, most mournful, most awful of the words which man may utter, or which man may hear—the eloquence of a perishing nation.

There is another eloquence, in which the national consciousness of a young or renewed and vast strength, of trust in a dazzling, certain, and limitless future, an inward glorying in victories yet to be won, sounds out as by voice of clarion, challenging to contest for the highest prize of earth; such as that in which the leader of Israel in its first days holds up to the new nation the Land of Promise; such as that in the well-imagined speeches scattered by Livy over the history of the "majestic series of victories" speaks the Roman consciousness of growing aggrandizement which should subject the world; such as that through which, at the tribunes of her revolution, in the bulletins of her rising soldiers, France told to the world her dream of glory.

And of this kind somewhat is ours—cheerful, hopeful, trusting, as befits youth and spring; the eloquence of a state beginning to ascend to the first class of power, eminence, and consideration, and conscious of itself. It is to no purpose that they tell you it is in bad taste; that it partakes of arrogance and vanity; that a true national good breeding would not know, or seem to know, whether the nation is old or young; whether the tides of being are at their flow or ebb; whether these coursers of the sun are sinking slowly to rest, wearied with a journey of a thousand years, or just bounding from the Orient unbreathed. Higher laws than those of taste determine the general forms of the expression of that consciousness. Let the downward age of America find its orators and

poets and artists to erect its spirit, or grace and soothe its dying; be it ours to go up with Webster to the Rock, the Monument, the Capitol, and bid "the distant generations hail!"

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Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Choate's *Eulogy of Webster*

I. What is meant by: (1) *Nilum parvum videre;* (2) Vulcanian panoply; (3) vermiculate questions; (4) Δεινότης; (5) *aliquid immensum infinitumque;* (6) constellations that walk around and watch the pole; (7) well-imagined speeches of Livy?

II. What internal evidence is there that Choate was familiar with: (1) Butler's *Hudribras,* Part I, Canto I, line 67; (2) the opening of the *Odyssey;* (3) the classical myth of Helios; (4) *Exodus,* 4:10-16, and *Deuteronomy?*

III. Who were (1) Chatham; (2) Burke; (3) Fox; (4) Sheridan; (5) Windham; (6) Pitt; (7) Grattan; (8) Canning; (9) Peel; (10) Mansfield; (11) Thurlow; (12) Dunning; (13) Erskine; (14) Camden; (15) Curran; (16) Demosthenes; (17) Kossuth; (18) Livy?

IV. What indirect reference does Choate make: (1) to Webster's *Speech in the Dartmouth College Case;* (2) to the *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson;* (3) to Webster's Whig principles on internal improvements; (4) to his speech in the *Girard Will Case;* (5) to his speech on *The Presidential Protest?*

V. What indirect reference does Choate make to the work of: (1) Tiglath-Pileser III; (2) Shalmaneser IV; (3) Sargon II; (4) Sennacherib; Nebuchadnezzar; (5) Micah; (6) Isaiah; (7) Moses; (8) Mirabeau; (9) Danton; (10) Robespierre; (11) Napoleon?

VI. What was Choate's argument in refutation to the charge that Webster's oratory was in bad taste?

Dictionary Studies from Rufus Choate

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. affluence 2. aggrandizement 3. ambiguous 4. attested 5. canons 6. capacious 7. clarion 8. collate 9. column 10. consummate 11. curtain 12. desolated 13. diffusive 14. discernment 15. era 16. felicity 17. fountain 18. genius 19. illustration 20. incompatible 21. organon 22. panoply 23. perspicuous 24. primeval 25. resources 26. serried 27. sovereignty 28. stature 29. subtlety 30. tribunes 31. trophies 32. vermiculate.

CHAPTER XI

STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

Orators and Oratory of the Decade Before the Civil War

The year 1850 establishes a great epoch in American oratory; for, in that year, with the passage of the *Clay Compromise Measures,* the old triumvirate of American orators and statesmen began to totter from their position of pre-eminence, and a new school of orators, representing a younger generation with new ideals, came into power in the councils of the nation.

On March 4, 1850, Calhoun delivered in the Senate his last great speech, and four weeks later he passed away. On March 7 of the same year, Webster delivered his last memorable utterance in the Senate, and then lingered for two years among the scenes of his former triumphs, loaded with reproach and ignominy, until his death in October, 1852. And, similarly, in the early months of 1850, Clay delivered his remarkable series of appeals for his *Compromise Measures,* only to find himself worn out by his exertions for the Union, so that he too went down to his death, four months before Webster, in June, 1852.

Though these great orators thus rapidly passed away, their last important work in statesmanship was destined to cast its shadow across the next decade of American history, to inspire and to provoke a most brilliant display of political and platform oratory.

The Compromise of 1850, which was the work of their hands, postponed for a decade the outbreak of civil war; but it, just as surely, sowed the seeds of that civil war, and gave

to orators in this decade, between 1850 and 1860, the tremendous moral and political issues that shook the nation as a prelude to the actual conflict of arms.

Calhoun was dead, but the terms that he demanded for the South, and the threat of secession, as the price that the North must pay to retain the Southern States in the Union, were contained in the *Compromise Measures* and in a supplementary gentlemen's agreement between the leaders of the two great parties, the Whigs and the Democrats.

These terms, as Calhoun himself expressed them in his speech of March 4, 1850, were that "the North must do justice by conceding to the South an equal right in the acquired territory; by causing the stipulations relative to fugitive slaves to be faithfully fulfilled; and by ceasing the agitation of the slave question."

In return for the admission of California as a free State, which upset the balance of power in the government between North and South; and in return for the abolition of the slave-trade in the District of Columbia; Clay and Webster, as spokesmen of the Northern Whigs, gave to the South the drastic Fugitive Slave Law; then they agreed to the organization of the Territories of New Mexico and Utah without any reference to their being slave or free; and finally they covenanted personally with the Southern leaders to do all in their power to stamp out the agitation of the slave question.

This seemed to many like a hard bargain for the North, inasmuch as California apparently was destined to be free anyway as a result of its settlement by free-State people in the gold rush of 1849; and because the concession in regard to the slave-trade in the District of Columbia was of infinitesimal importance. And it might have been a hard bargain for the North, if the agreement had been honored by those

who were expected to abide by it; but such was not the case. The Whig leaders had promised more than they could fulfill; and the question arises, therefore, whether this compromise was not a bad bargain for the South rather than for the North.

The first thing to be done was to enforce the *Fugitive Slave Law,* but this law was soon reduced almost to a dead letter by a well-organized system of aiding runaway slaves through what was known as the "underground railway."

Then the second thing to be done was to suppress the agitation for the abolition of slavery; but all efforts to accomplish this end were equally futile; and attempts to check free speech, when coupled with efforts to enforce an obnoxious law, only made more fervent and more general the abolition sentiment of the North.

What then was the South to do? It had but two choices, either to regain the lost balance of power, or to secede from the Union; and, for ten years, it tried the first alternative, and then tried the latter, which it was constantly threatening to adopt, unless all manner of concessions were made for its protection.

To regain the balance of power between North and South by providing for the admission of more slave States, the South put forward a claim slightly broader than that made even by Calhoun; namely, that the South should be conceded an equal right in *all* Territories. By this new doctrine, the South secured the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854, and precipitated a terrific struggle for the admission of Kansas to the Union as a slave State. Then, emboldened by a premature prospect of victory in the early stages of this struggle, it pressed forward to open up all Territories to slavery by a decision, which it procured from the Supreme Court in the famous *Dred Scott Case* of 1857.

Such bold measures as these, however, soon produced a violent reaction in the North. The Abolitionists believed that a direct counter-blow must be struck at the very heart of slavery; and, accordingly, under the leadership of John Brown, they organized the ill-fated raid upon Harper's Ferry, Virginia, to start a slave uprising in the old South and thereby to free all slaves from bondage.

This raid served merely to infuriate the South; but an even worse situation was yet to follow; for, almost on the very heels of this enterprise, a Northern man of anti-slavery sentiments, who was suspected of being an extreme Abolitionist, though this suspicion proved to be unfounded, was elected in 1860 to the presidency of the nation. Over this event the South became despondent; it lost all hope of recovering the balance of power between North and South; it even feared, however unwarrantably, for the perpetuation of slavery in the States where it had always existed; and it was ready, therefore, to try its only remaining alternative, to secede from the Union and risk the horrors of civil war.

Such in brief is the history of this decade. Each movement in the struggle between North and South, between freedom and slavery, brought forth its natural accompaniment of eloquence. For the first four years of the decade, old-time Whig orators in the North and all pro-slavery spokesmen for the South pleaded for the carrying-out of the *Fugitive Slave Law;* and anti-slavery orators in the North, whether belonging to the Democratic party, the Whig party, the Free Soil party, or the Abolition party, demanded the nullification of the law or its repeal.

Then came the struggle over Kansas, and out of this strife was born the Republican party—a party that absorbed all the anti-slavery elements of the Democratic, Whig, and Free Soil

parties, and stood for the principle that slavery was to be kept out of the Territories and kept within the bounds of the then existing slave States.

Every party, and every faction within every party, produced its great leaders in the field of oratory. The anti-slavery Whigs, for example, produced William H. Seward of New York. The anti-slavery Democrats produced Salmon P. Chase of Ohio. The Free Soilers produced Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. The Abolitionists produced Theodore Parker, Wendell Phillips, and Henry Ward Beecher. The old-time Whigs put forth such spokesmen as Rufus Choate and Edward Everett. The new Republican party discovered Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. And the old Democratic party acknowledged the pre-eminence of Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant," also from Illinois.

All these orators were men of the highest rank in the field of eloquence; but none was more powerful, none was more conspicuous, none was more daring, and none exerted a greater influence for good or ill during this ten-year period than did Stephen A. Douglas.

Because Douglas was the dominating figure in Congress and in the political life of the nation throughout the decade before the Civil War, he must be regarded as the foremost political orator of his times in America.

The Life of Stephen A. Douglas

Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois was the great storm center of American politics throughout the decade immediately preceding the Civil War. To students of American political history, he will always be known as the advocate of the doctrine of "popular sovereignty" in respect to the organization

of Territories; as the author of the fateful *Kansas-Nebraska Bill* that incorporated this doctrine in legislation for the organization of these Territories; as the unwilling instrument for repealing the Missouri Compromise in connection with the Kansas-Nebraska legislation; as the heroic opponent of the slave oligarchy in its attempt to foil popular sovereignty and to foist slavery upon Kansas against the will of the people; and as the great leader of Northern Democrats in securing their loyalty to the Union in the dark days at the beginning of the Civil War.

So much, Douglas means to students of politics; but to students of oratory, he will always be remembered for his overpowering eloquence in support of the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill;* for his powerful, clever, brilliant opposition to Lincoln in the *Lincoln-Douglas Debates;* and for his long series of speeches at the outbreak of the Civil War to arouse Northern Democrats to the necessity of supporting the government and crushing the rebellion that then threatened the Union.

This brilliant statesman and orator was born among the Green Mountains of Vermont in the little town of Brandon in the year 1813. As a result of the early death of his father, he was reared under rather straitened circumstances; and, in his youth, with his mother and stepfather, he removed to Ontario, New York. There, for a time he attended the Canandaigua Academy and managed to study a little law on the side; but, when he found that the cost of his education was becoming a burden upon his parents, he determined to follow the new stream of migration westward, and there, like many of his predecessors, to grow up with the country.

Accordingly, at the age of twenty, he started out alone for the great West, and dropped anchor for a period at Cleveland, where he began again the study of law, but was soon pros-

trated by malarial fever. Though urgently beseeched to return home after this experience, he determined, however, to go still further west, and proceeded without definite aim to Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, and then to Jacksonville, Illinois. For a few months, he taught school in the town of Winchester to tide himself over a financial shortage; and then, one month before he was twenty-one, he passed a perfunctory bar examination and began the practice of law at Jacksonville.

To Douglas, the law was simply a stepping stone to politics; and, almost like a meteor, this young stripling, in a strange, new environment, quickly became, first, the political boss of the Democratic party in his county and soon thereafter of the whole State. It was Douglas, in fact, who organized the first effective political machine to operate in Illinois.

By great pluck and shrewd political maneuvering, he secured for himself, while still in the twenties, the successive political offices of State's Attorney, member of the legislature, Register of the Land Office, Secretary-of-State, and Judge of the Supreme Court; and then, much to the surprise of many of his fellow-Democrats, while only thirty years of age, in 1843, he was chosen for a seat in Congress.

Here, in this new political arena, Douglas found it necessary to exert himself tremendously to make an immediate impression upon his colleagues, so that, back home, he would be sure of winning a re-election; and, that he did make such an impression, is the verdict of all historians; for, says Schouler, he and "Tom" Corwin were considered to be the only promising orators and statesmen among the younger men in Congress.

Douglas's diminutive stature, but sturdy frame and energetic manner, soon gave to him the title of the "Little Giant"; and his unusual style of frontier oratory created nothing less than a sensation; for, as John Quincy Adams remarked in his

vitriolic way, Douglas, while speaking, would "lash himself into such a heat that, if his body had been made of combustible matter, it would have burned out, and then in the midst of his roaring, to save himself from choking, he would strip off and cast away his cravat, unbutton his waistcoat, and assume the air and aspect of a half-naked pugilist."

It was very plain that Adams despised, not only the type of oratory, but also the type of political philosophy, that Douglas represented; but others were not so critical. Others, in fact, believed that a great new leader of the Democratic party had appeared; and, consequently, Douglas easily won his re-election to the House in time to support the Polk administration in all its utmost claims during the Oregon dispute and the war with Mexico.

As chairman of the House committee on Territories, Douglas occupied a position of great prominence; and, largely through his activity in this capacity, he secured his elevation, in 1847, from the House to the Senate, where, with the passing away of Clay, Calhoun, and Webster, he became, with Seward and Sumner, one of the foremost leaders in statesmanship and eloquence during the decade preceding the Civil War.

The great doctrine with which the name of Douglas is associated in history is the doctrine of "popular sovereignty" sometimes derisively called "squatter sovereignty"; and the chief event in our history with which his name is associated is the passage of the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill* in 1854, which repealed the Missouri Compromise, gave "popular sovereignty" its trial, and brought on the civil war of Kansas, thus raising in opposition to the Democrats, the new Republican party, which swept Lincoln into the presidency and precipitated the great war between the States.

Almost from the very beginning of Douglas's career in the

Senate, he championed the theory that we should let the people rule, that we should let the people of the Territories decide for themselves whether they should have slavery or not; and at last he succeeded in writing that doctrine into the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill.* To do this, however, he found that he was forced to repeal the Missouri Compromise; and for such an attack upon what was regarded as a venerable and sacred agreement, he was roundly denounced throughout the North as an instrument of the slave power.

When the terrible civil war of Kansas followed closely upon the heels of his enactment, he was still further denounced as the real author of the crimes committed in and against Kansas, but at last he had an opportunity to redeem himself in the North, while he lost favor in the South; for, during the early years of President Buchanan's administration, Douglas refused to follow this Northern Democrat with Southern sympathies, when it was apparent that Buchanan intended to coerce and bribe the people of Kansas to accept a slave constitution. Against such a scheme, Douglas revolted; and, breaking with his party, he was hailed by many anti-slavery leaders as the great instrument that Providence had put in their hands to frustrate the intrigues of the slave oligarchy.

Such was the situation, roughly speaking, when Douglas met Lincoln in the famous debates of the summer and fall of 1858, when Douglas for the third time was seeking election to the Senate and was standing on his record of service for the last twelve years as one of the great leaders of his party; while Lincoln, with no such brilliant record to point to, was seeking for the first time the seat that Douglas occupied, with a plea that slavery should be kept out of the new Territories and be placed in the process of ultimate extinction by being confined within its original limits.

The story of these debates is familiar to all students of American history. At first, it seemed as if Lincoln would be hopelessly out-distanced by his clever and accomplished rival; but none knew better than Douglas how Lincoln would test his mettle. When these two wary minds grappled with each other, not only their immediate auditors, but the whole nation, listened. First one and then the other seemed to have the advantage, and the result was not known until after the election, when Lincoln received a majority of the popular vote, while Douglas, by a narrow margin, was elected to the Senate by the legislature which remained in the hands of the Democrats.

It was these debates, which took place on the Illinois prairies, that first drove a wedge between the Northern and the Southern Democrats and raised the hopes for Republican success in the presidential campaign of 1860. It was these debates that kept before the people Stephen A. Douglas, the most prominent Northern contender for the Democratic nomination for the presidency; and very literally, it was these debates that gave Lincoln to the nation.

When, in 1860, Lincoln's election was declared, and there were immediate signs of a dissolution of the Union, Douglas showed himself to be a character worthy of veneration by all loyal citizens. Disregarding his bitter disappointment in being defeated for the presidency, Douglas promised Lincoln his full support in every effort to preserve the Union; and, by a rather touching incident at Lincoln's first inaugural, he displayed his loyalty to his victorious rival; for there, when Lincoln seemed to be embarrassed, not knowing where to lay his hat, Douglas stepped forward conspicuously to take it and hold it for Lincoln throughout the exercises.

More than this gracious act, however, was soon demanded

of Douglas; for, in a little over a month from this inaugural, the great Civil War had begun. No one could do so much as Douglas to cement all factions of the North into a solid fighting force to preserve the Union, and this Douglas promised to do so far as his powers would permit. Accordingly, after consultation with Lincoln, he started out to win the wavering peoples in the border States and in the great North-West. At Bellaire, in Ohio, opposite what is now a portion of West Virginia, he spoke to great numbers from that mountain State, inspiring them to loyalty and separation from their brethren in Old Virginia. At Columbus, Ohio, he spoke from a balcony of his hotel out into the darkness over the heads of thousands, who had come to hear his counsel, and when he had finished his fervid exhortation for the Union, the multitude responded by a deep and loud *Amen*. Then, at Springfield, Illinois, he next appeared before the State Legislature, to urge that "when hostile armies are marching under new and odious banners against the government of our country, the shortest way to peace is the most stupendous and unanimous preparation for war." The effect of this speech was nothing short of marvelous. So say those who heard it. But this speech was followed by another at Chicago, which was quite its equal, and in this last appeal, Douglas first used the word *traitor*. "There can be no neutrals in this war," said he, "only patriots—or traitors."

These were almost the dying words of the great statesman, who had been a leader in every political battle in the exciting period before the war. By making excessive demands upon his strength, the "Little Giant" had undermined his constitution. Douglas fell ill after this Chicago speech, and for weeks lay between life and death, in his delirium crying out again and again: "Telegraph to the President and let the column

move on." Then, on the Third of June, 1861, his mind cleared for a moment just before he died, and he whispered to his wife this message for his sons: "Tell them to obey the laws and support the Constitution of the United States."

Thus died, at the very beginning of the great war, one of the most conspicuous statesmen of the middle of the nineteenth century—a man whose name has been eclipsed indeed by that of his great rival; yet a man who will long be remembered as one of the brightest ornaments of his party; a man who vied with the greatest leaders of his time in the field of political oratory and parliamentary debate; a man who took to heart and tried to practice that great maxim of his party, which says, *Let the people rule;* and a man, at last, who, though defeated in his ambition to be President, gave nevertheless, heroic and overwhelming proof of his patriotism and genuine devotion to the cause of the Union.

Historical Setting of Douglas's Speech for the Kansas-Nebraska Bill

The speech of Stephen A. Douglas in support of the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill,* delivered in the United States Senate between the hours of midnight and sunrise on the night of March 3 and 4, 1854, was not only one of the most historic utterances ever heard in Congress, but also one of the most brilliant and bold exhibitions of eloquence ever given by the "Little Giant" of Illinois, then at the very height of his power and at the turning point in his career.

Because of this speech, Douglas has been praised by his adherents as the only great constructive statesman at the national capital in the decade before the Civil War; and also because of this speech, he has been condemned by his oppo-

nents as a scheming politician, ambitious for the presidency and ready to sacrifice for personal gain the peace and happiness of the nation.

Which of these views is correct may be left to the student of history to determine. The speech by Douglas on this occasion was given in support of a bill to organize Kansas and Nebraska as Territories, with a provision regarding slavery that embodied the doctrine of popular sovereignty; that is, that the question of slavery should be left for settlement to the decision of the people residing in the Territories; and with the added provision that the clause of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 prohibiting slavery in the latitudes north of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes should not be construed as applying to these Territories; that, in fact, the Missouri Compromise was no longer operative.

It was this feature of the bill, repealing the Missouri Compromise, and establishing in its place the doctrine of popular sovereignty, that brought down upon Douglas the wrath of every anti-slavery man in the country and that led to the accusation that he was conspiring with the South to obtain the presidency in the next election.

To support this view of the situation, his opponents contended that there was positively no need for organizing these Territories; inasmuch as, according to the Indian commissioner of Nebraska, there was, in October, 1853, no settlement in Nebraska and only three white men, not married to Indians, within the Territory; and, according to General Houston, there was not one white man in Kansas.

What motive, then, could Douglas have for pushing the organization of these Territories and precipitating a struggle over slavery? None, they said, but to advance his political schemes for the presidency; and, later, to vindicate this posi-

tion, they quoted his subsequent statement that "his party, in the election of Pierce, had consumed all its powder, and therefore, without a deep-reaching agitation, it would have no more ammunition for its artillery."

But were they quite fair to Douglas? It must be remembered that, since 1844, Douglas had tried again and again, in his capacity as chairman either of the House, or of the Senate, Committee on Territories, to organize the Territory of Nebraska, once in 1844, again in 1848, and a third time in 1852, only to be defeated by the indifference or the political chicanery of his associates.

To Douglas it seemed imperative that Nebraska be organized as a Territory in order that some kind of stable government might be established between Oregon and California on the Pacific, and the older States to the eastward, to provide safe means of communication, to bind the Union together, and to protect the great streams of emigrants that trailed across the plains in covered wagons to settle on the Pacific coast.

All his efforts were defeated, however, by indifference in the East or by schemes of politicians in Texas, Missouri, and Iowa, who represented railroad interests of their respective sections, one of which wanted to construct, with government aid, a Pacific railroad along a Southern route from Texas, another of which wanted such a road from Missouri, and still another of which wanted such a road with a Northern route from Iowa.

Douglas, himself, was extremely interested in the Northern route, but he could do nothing to promote it, until Benton of Missouri began to encourage the Wyandot Indians of Kansas to petition for a Territorial government, and until Johnson of Iowa began to send temporary settlers into Nebraska for

the same purpose, in order to promote their respective schemes for railroad development.

Then, suddenly, in 1853, Douglas's opportunity came. Senator Dodge of Iowa introduced a bill to organize Nebraska on the same terms as had been accorded to New Mexico and Utah in 1850 without conditions as to slavery. Douglas received this bill in his committee, and determined to placate both the Missouri railroad interests and the Iowa railroad interests by organizing two Territories, Kansas and Nebraska, on the principle of popular sovereignty, with the supposition, no doubt, that one would become slave and the other free as a result of the wish of the settlers.

He had no desire at first to repeal openly the Missouri Compromise in the legislation he recommended from his committee. This he wished to do only indirectly by embodying in his proposal the principle of popular sovereignty. Regarding this matter, however, he had no choice finally; for Senator Dixon of Kentucky, working in co-operation with Senator Atchison of Missouri, offered an amendment to Douglas's bill, which in effect directly repealed the Missouri Compromise; and Douglas was forced to accept this amendment as a correct and straightforward interpretation of his intention.

This amendment placed Douglas in a most difficult position; because he knew that he had declared publicly, five years earlier, that the Missouri Compromise "had become canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing which no ruthless hand would ever be reckless enough to disturb."

There was nothing for him to do, however, but to accept the amendment and to defend his position as best he could against a great popular agitation in the North that was stirred up by his opponents in Congress, who issued what they called an *Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the*

People of the United States in protest against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

The debates on Douglas's proposal began late in January, 1854, and continued throughout February, and into the first four days of March. During these debates, Chase, Seward, Sumner, Wade, and Everett all opposed the measure with their utmost vigor; but Douglas was a match for them all. He knew he had the necessary votes to carry through his project, and he brought it skilfully and expeditiously to its third and last reading.

At midnight, on the Third of March, 1854, he himself took the floor in its defense, not for the purpose of securing approval in the Senate, since that was already assured, but for the purpose, rather, of vindicating himself before the country at large. From midnight until daybreak, he spoke to a crowded house, with all the animation of conscious power, contending that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was only an incident of the bill, and that its main object was "to establish the fundamental principle of popular sovereignty, to relieve Congress and the country in the future of all trouble about slavery in the Territories, and to remove the vexed question from politics by leaving the whole matter to the inhabitants of the respective Territories."

At last, the vote was taken, and the people of Washington were roused from their slumbers at daybreak by the boom of cannon that announced the dawn of a new era. Chase, Sumner, Seward, and Wade were overwhelmed by their defeat; yet, as Chase walked down the steps of the Capitol, he said with truth to Sumner: "They celebrate a present victory, but the echoes they awake will never rest until slavery itself shall die."

The bill had yet to pass the House; and, in that body, it

met with even more violent opposition than in the Senate. The House, however, followed the lead of the Senate; and, as a result, the whole North stood aghast at what had happened. Douglas, though at the height of his power as an orator, had made a fearful blunder.

"A majority of the Northern State legislatures," says Elson, the historian, "recorded their disapproval. Douglas was denounced on every hand as the betrayer of his country, the Judas Iscariot; and a society of women in Ohio sent him thirty pieces of silver. His middle name *Arnold* was emphasized to connect him with the archtraitor of the Revolution. Attempting to speak in his own city of Chicago, he was hooted off the stage. According to his own statement, he 'could travel from Boston to Chicago by the light of his own effigies.' "

By this speech, Douglas succeeded in giving a trial to his doctrine of popular sovereignty. Free-State men and slave-State men rushed into Kansas to claim it for their own. A horrible civil war ensued within that Territory. The country as a whole was shocked at this spectacle of civil strife. The Republican party was organized to combat the doctrine of Douglas and to repair the injury he had done. And finally the great Civil War emerged from the strife in Kansas to put to an end forever the agitation of the slave question by wiping out slavery wherever it existed within the Union of the States.

Stephen A. Douglas: For the Kansas-Nebraska Bill
March 3-4, 1854

Mr. President: It has been urged in debate that there is no necessity for the organization of these Territorial governments; and I have been called upon to point out any public and national considerations which require action at this time.

Senators seem to forget that our immense and valuable

possessions on the Pacific are separated from the States and organized Territories on this side of the Rocky Mountains by a vast wilderness, filled by hostile savages—that nearly a hundred thousand emigrants pass through this barbarous wilderness every year, on their way to California and Oregon —that the emigrants are American citizens, our own constituents, who are entitled to the protection of law and government, and that they are left to make their way, as best they may, without the protection or aid of law or government. The United States mails for New Mexico and Utah, and official communications between this government and the authorities of those Territories are required to be carried over these wild plains, and through the gorges of the mountains, where you have made no provisions for roads, bridges, or ferries to facilitate travel, or forts or other means of safety to protect life.

As often as I have brought forward and urged the adoption of measures to remedy these evils, and afford security against the damages to which our people are constantly exposed, they have been promptly voted down as not being of sufficient importance to command the favorable consideration of Congress. Now, when I propose to organize the Territories, and allow the people to do for themselves what you have so often refused to do for them, I am told that there are not white inhabitants enough permanently settled in the country to require and sustain a government. True; there is not a very large population there, for the very reason that your Indian code and intercourse laws exclude the settlers, and forbid their remaining there to cultivate the soil. You refuse to throw the country open to settlers, and then object to the organization of the Territories, upon the ground that there is not a sufficient number of inhabitants.

Mr. President, I should like to bring forward for your consideration the great principle involved in this bill, without omitting, however, to notice some of those extraneous matters which have been brought into this discussion with the view of producing another anti-slavery agitation. The opponents of this measure wish to have people believe that the abrogation of what they call the *Missouri Compromise* was the main object and aim of the bill, and that the only question involved is, whether the prohibition of slavery north of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes shall be repealed or not? That which is a mere incident they choose to consider the principle. They make war on the means by which we propose to accomplish an object, instead of openly resisting the object itself. The principle which we propose to carry into effect by the bill is this: That *Congress shall neither legislate slavery into any Territories or State, nor out of the same; but the people shall be left free to regulate their domestic concerns in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.*

Now, sir, if opponents of this measure have entire confidence in the correctness of their own position, why do they not meet the issue boldly and fairly, and controvert the soundness of this great principle of popular sovereignty in obedience to the Constitution? They know full well that this was the principle upon which the colonies separated from the crown of Great Britain, the principle upon which the battles of the Revolution were fought, and the principle upon which our republican system was founded. They cannot be ignorant of the fact that the Revolution grew out of the assertion of the right on the part of the imperial government to interfere with the internal affairs and domestic concerns of the colonies.

The Declaration of Independence had its origin in the violation of that great fundamental principle which secured

to the colonies the right to regulate their own domestic affairs in their own way; and the Revolution resulted in the triumph of that principle, and the recognition of the right asserted by it. Abolitionism proposes to destroy the right and extinguish the principle for which our forefathers waged a seven years' bloody war, and upon which our whole system of free government is founded. They not only deny the application of this principle to the Territories, but insist upon fastening the prohibition upon all the States to be formed out of those Territories.

The doctrine, therefore, of the Abolitionists—the doctrine of the opponents of the *Nebraska and Kansas Bill,* and the advocates of the Missouri restriction—demands Congressional interference with slavery not only in the Territories, but in all the new States to be formed therefrom. It is the same doctrine, when applied to the Territories and new States of this Union, which the British government attempted to enforce by the sword upon the American colonies.

The opponents of the bill tell us that agitation is no part of their policy; that their great desire is peace and harmony; and they complain bitterly that I should have disturbed the repose of the country by the introduction of this measure! Let me ask these professed friends of peace, and avowed enemies of agitation, how the issue could have been avoided. They tell me that I should have left the question alone; that is, that I should have left Nebraska unorganized, the people unprotected, and the Indian barrier in existence, until the swelling tide of emigration should burst through and accomplish by violence what it is the part of wisdom and statesmanship to direct and regulate by law. How long could you have postponed action with safety? How long could you maintain that Indian barrier, and restrain the onward march of civiliza-

tion, Christianity, and free government by a barbarian wall? Do you suppose that you could keep that vast country a howling wilderness in all time to come, roamed over by hostile savages, cutting off all safe communication between our Atlantic and Pacific possessions? I tell you that the time for action has come, and cannot be postponed. It is a case in which the "let-alone" policy would precipitate a crisis which must inevitably result in violence, anarchy, and strife.

You cannot fix bounds to the onward march of this great and growing country. You cannot fetter the limbs of the young giant. He will burst all your chains. He will expand, and grow, and increase, and extend civilization, Christianity, and liberal principles. Then, sir, if you cannot check the growth of the country in that direction, is it not the part of wisdom to look the danger in the face, and provide for an event which you cannot avoid? I tell you, sir, you must provide for lines of continuous settlement from the Mississippi valley to the Pacific ocean. And in making this provision, you must decide upon what principles the Territories shall be organized; in other words, whether the people shall be allowed to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, according to the provisions of this bill, or whether the opposite doctrine of Congressional interference is to prevail. Postpone it, if you will; but whenever you do act, this question must be met and decided.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY ON THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA TROUBLES—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Salmon P. Chase: *On the Kansas-Nebraska Bill* (Feb. 3, 1854)—See Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) III, 3-31.
2. Edward Everett: *On the Kansas-Nebraska Bill* (Feb. 8, 1854)—See Johnston and Woodburn, III, 32-49.

3. Stephen A. Douglas: *On the Kansas-Nebraska Bill* (March 3, 1854)—See Johnston and Woodburn, III, 50-87.
4. Charles Sumner: *The Crime against Kansas* (1856)—See Johnston and Woodburn, III, 88-120; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) VIII, 262-284; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) V, 1952-1969; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) IX, 160-173; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) X, 150-160.
5. Preston S. Brooks: *In Defense of His Attack on Sumner* (1856)—See Bryan's *W. F. O.*, IX, 174-176.
6. Abraham Lincoln: *"House-Divided against Itself" Speech* (1858)—See *Life and Works of Lincoln* (Centenary Edition 1907) III, 35-46; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* III, 168-183; Shurter's *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* (1906) 133-142; Putnam's *Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1913) 1-13.
7. *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1858)—See Putnam's edition (1913).

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Smith's *Political History of Slavery;* Von Holst's *Constitutional History of U. S.;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America;* Parkman's *Oregon Trail;* Hough's historical novel, *The Covered Wagon.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Chase, Salmon P.—See biographies by Hart, Shuckers, and Warden.

Douglas, Stephen A.—See biographies by Sheahan, Johnson, Carr, and Willis.

Everett, Edward—See biography by Frothingham.

Lincoln, Abraham—See biographies by Nicolay and Hay, Morse, Arnold, Hapgood, Stephenson, Tarbell, Barton, Charnwood, Schurz, Britt, and Sandburg.

Sumner, Charles—See biographies by Chaplin and Chaplin, Grimke, Dawes, Storey, and Haynes.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Douglas's *Speech for the Kansas-Nebraska Bill*

I. What were: (1) the States between the Mississippi and the Rockies that had been admitted before 1854; (2) the routes taken by American pioneers who went overland to California or Oregon; (3) the type of government provided for Territories—See Bryce's *American Commonwealth;* (4) the difference between primary and incidental principles in legisla-

tion; (5) the provisions of the Missouri Compromise; (6) the bearing of the *Ordinance of 1787* on Douglas's theory of popular sovereignty; (7) the irony in Douglas's claim that the "let-alone" policy of his opponents would precipitate violence, anarchy, and strife?

Dictionary Studies from Stephen A. Douglas

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. abrogation 2. anarchy 3. burst 4. controvert 5. domestic 6. extraneous 7. facilitate 8. government 9. hostile 10. incident 11. minutes 12. often 13. therefore 14. whole.

CHAPTER XII

CHARLES SUMNER

Sumner's Position Among Contemporary Orators

The name of Charles Sumner will always be conspicuous in the history of American oratory; first, for his scholarly platform eloquence during the Mexican War, against that war, and against all war, as a means for the settlement of international disputes; and second, for his equally scholarly and extremely vehement eloquence in denunciation of slavery and the slave oligarchy in America during the decade following the Mexican War.

The events in American history that provided Charles Sumner with the themes for his greatest eloquence were: the controversy over the admission to the Union of Texas as a slave State in 1845; the Mexican War for the seizure of territory from a neighboring republic and for the extension of slavery within the Union; the Compromise of 1850 with its provision for a *Fugitive Slave Law;* the repeal of the *Missouri Compromise* by the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska legislation in 1854; and the civil strife in Kansas, resulting from the doctrine of popular sovereignty as applied to Kansas, together with the attempts of the pro-slavery party in Congress to force recognition of the pro-slave faction in Kansas during the crisis of 1856.

Though Sumner was a conspicuous orator in Congress throughout the Civil War period and the following period of reconstruction, he was never so renowned or so conspicuous

for eloquence as he was in these earlier years from 1845 onward until the time when he was struck down by an assailant in the United States Senate just after he had made his famous speech on *The Crime against Kansas* in 1856.

During this period of eleven years, Sumner won his greatest fame as an accomplished and forceful speaker for special occasions, and as the foremost anti-slavery orator in Congress.

This fame he acquired while other great orators of a preceding generation were still holding the attention of an admiring public; while, for example, Webster, Choate, and Everett were still conspicuous rivals; while Wendell Phillips, Theodore Parker, and Henry Ward Beecher, among men of his own generation, were winning converts and applause for their anti-slavery eloquence on the platform; and while William H. Seward and Salmon P. Chase were also exerting their efforts in the Senate to cope with the measures advanced by the slave oligarchy and with the eloquence of Northern Senators, like Lewis Cass and Stephen A. Douglas, who seemed to be working always to promote the schemes of the Southern slaveholders.

If Sumner's position among the platform orators of America were to be given a proper estimate, there is no doubt but that he would be accorded a foremost place in the period of the Mexican War between 1845 and 1849; and if his position among Congressional orators were to be given a similar estimate, there is also no doubt that, in the decade before the Civil War, he was the most conspicuous anti-slavery orator in Congress and the most powerful parliamentary orator of his times in America with the sole exception of Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant" from Illinois.

The Life of Charles Sumner

Charles Sumner was the foremost champion of the anti-slavery movement in the United States Senate; and, like Wendell Phillips, he was also one of the most brilliant platform orators and social reformers of his age. Primarily a man of letters, and a deep student of law in its broadest aspects, with an utter loathing for politics, Charles Sumner was destined, nevertheless, to spend the major part of his life in the toil and strife of the political arena, and finally to emerge as one of the nation's most honored and distinguished statesmen.

He was born in Boston in the year 1811, and like Phillips, was a graduate of the Boston Latin School, of Harvard, and of the Harvard Law School. Subsequently, he rounded out his education by an extensive tour of Europe, and returned to America thoroughly cosmopolitan in his views and a recognized social favorite among the intellectual leaders of two continents. At this time he took no interest whatsoever in American politics, preferring rather to devote all his energies to the practice of his profession, to the writing of legal treatises, and now and then to the teaching of law in the Harvard Law School.

He first attracted public notice as an orator, when, in 1845, he delivered on the Fourth of July, before the authorities of Boston, a most remarkable oration on *The True Grandeur of Nations,* declaring that this grandeur consisted in the achievements of peace, rather than in the glories of war. In the presence of many military organizations, who had come in full uniform, on a day set apart for recognition of the achievements of the Revolution, in the very shadow of Bunker Hill, and on the eve of the Mexican War, Sumner declared that

"there can be no peace that is not honorable, and no war that is not dishonorable." For hours, he held his audience spell-bound with admiration for his scholarly treatment of this age-old theme, drawing as he did lavishly upon the literature of all nations, ancient and modern, to give point to his message, until, at last, his speech seemed to sparkle and glisten in its unfolding like a veritable cloth of gold studded with gems of barbaric splendor. Yet, when he spoke to the citizen-soldiers before him as men who "affect the pride, and pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," being "closely pressed in padded and well-buttoned coats of blue, 'besmeared with gold,' surmounted by a huge mountain cap of shaggy bearskin with a barbarous device typical of brute force, a tiger painted on oilskin, tied to their backs,"—he incurred their fierce displeasure, and brought down upon himself the harshest criticism.

Both in America and in Europe, this splendid oration was greeted with the most extreme expressions of approval or disapproval; but, regardless of the manner in which it was received, it demonstrated that another great leader, like the prophets of Israel, had appeared in the land. It was followed soon afterward by other memorable addresses, such as the *Phi Beta Kappa Address* at Harvard on July 4, 1846; and the discourse on *Fame and Glory,* delivered before the literary societies of Amherst College at the commencement of 1847—two most remarkable orations showing the same profound scholarship, and exhibiting the same abhorrence of war and the same spirit of pride in the achievements of peace.

While Sumner was thus becoming an outspoken opponent of all war; he was also becoming more and more an outspoken opponent of slavery and the War with Mexico, which had as its purpose the extension of slave territories within the Union.

In political meetings, which he first began to attend at this time, he denounced unsparingly this barbarous war, and the slave-holders who had brought it upon us; but still being more of a scholar than a politician, he chose to deal one of his most effectual blows against slavery and the whole slave-system, not in the political arena, but from the lecture platform, when he presented in 1847 his brilliant and scholarly lecture on *White Slavery in the Barbary States;* compelling his listeners by this means to consider the horrors of American slavery by comparing them with the horrors inflicted upon white men in the slave-markets of the piratical states of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli.

Sumner became thoroughly aroused, however, to use his utmost efforts to abolish slavery only after the *Compromise Measures of 1850,* when the *Fugitive Slave Law* was passed, and colored citizens of the North were made the victims of slave-catchers, man-hunters, and kidnappers. Of this monstrous act of the national legislature, Sumner said, "I cannot believe that it will ever be executed here in Massachusetts"; —and of Webster, for his part in its enactment, Sumner said, "He has placed himself in the dark list of apostates."

In November, 1850, Sumner was one of the principal speakers at a mass-meeting in Faneuil Hall, called to denounce this legislation, and there he said concerning the future representatives of Massachusetts in Congress that—"The friends of freedom cannot lightly bestow their confidence. They can put trust only in men of tried character and inflexible will. Three things at least they must require; the first is *backbone;* the second is *backbone;* and the third is *backbone.* When I see a person talking loudly against slavery in private, but hesitating in public and failing in time of trial, I say, *He wants backbone.* When I see a person of upright character and pure

soul yielding to a temporizing policy, I cannot but say, *He wants backbone.* When I see a person leaning upon the action of a political party and never venturing to think for himself, I say, *He wants backbone.* When I see a man careful always to be on the side of the majority, and unwilling to appear in the minority, or, if need be, to stand alone, I say, *He wants backbone.* Wanting this, they all want that courage, constancy, firmness, which are essential to the support of principle. Let no such man be trusted."

No utterance could have described more fittingly by contrast the qualifications of Sumner for public office; and to this speech, he owed his election to the Senate, in 1851, as a representative of the Free-Soil party, and as the spokesman of all the moral forces in the country opposed to slavery.

Never before had Sumner held any political office; and, hence, he was extremely desirous of making friends at Washington and of learning thoroughly the procedure of the Senate, before he began there his assault on slavery. For eight months he was silent, and his friends began to doubt the wisdom of his election; but, at the end of that long period of delay, he came forward with a speech against slavery that met their most sanguine expectation.

The occasion for this speech was the introduction of the *Civil and Diplomatic Appropriation Bill* in 1852, when Sumner moved an amendment to an amendment providing that no money should be spent for the purpose of executing the *Fugitive Slave Law,* with the understanding that that law was thereby repealed. In supporting this amendment, Sumner delivered his first important speech in the Senate, under the well-known title of *Freedom National, Slavery Sectional.* This speech consumed four hours in its delivery; and at its conclusion, Sumner was universally recognized as the great outstand-

ing champion of freedom and the North, as Calhoun had been before the great champion of slavery and the South. Not only Northerners, but Southerners as well, joined in praise of its exalted eloquence and its statesmanlike presentation of fact and argument. It was, as Sears has said in his *History of Oratory,* "another landmark in the progress of liberty; and it did for Abolitionists what Webster's *Reply to Hayne* had done for Union-men twenty-one years before. It placed them upon the solid ground of the Constitution instead of the uncertain foothold of personal conviction."

From the time that this speech was delivered, Sumner had no further opportunity to speak in the Senate against slavery, until, almost two years afterwards, in 1854, Senator Douglas of Illinois introduced the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill,* which repealed the Missouri Compromise and opened up all the Territories to slavery. Then Sumner came forward with another stirring speech denouncing this measure, and predicting from it the most dire calamity. "Ah, sir," said he, "Senators vainly expect peace; but not in this way can peace come. In passing such a bill as is now threatened, you scatter from this dark midnight hour no seeds of harmony and good will, but broadcast through the land dragon's teeth, which haply may not spring up in a direful crop of armed men, yet I am assured, sir, will fructify in civil strife and feud. . . . This bill puts Freedom and Slavery face to face, and bids them grapple. Who can doubt the result? It opens wide the door of the future, when at last there will really be a North and the slave power will be broken. . . . Everywhere within the sphere of Congress, the great *Northern Hammer* will descend to smite the wrong, and the irresistible cry will break forth, 'No more slave States!' "

This speech, powerful as it was, at the moment raised no

bitter feeling against Sumner, but shortly afterwards a riot occurred in Boston when an outraged populace stormed the jail to prevent the return of Anthony Burns, an escaped slave, to his master in the South; and, for this occurrence, which was regarded by Southerners as an outrage against the majesty of the law, Sumner, though innocent, was held to be responsible. Henceforth, wherever he appeared in Washington, his life was in danger; and he was called by his enemies "a miscreant, a madman, a serpent, and a sneaking, sinuous, snakelike poltroon." The thing that stung him most, however, was the social ostracism that this speech brought upon him. "If we cannot restrain or prevent his eternal warfare upon the feelings and rights of Southern gentlemen," said one of his critics, "we may at least rob the serpent of his fangs; we can paralyze his influence, by placing him in that nadir of social degradation which he merits."

Henceforth, Sumner came into almost constant collision with Senator Butler of South Carolina and with Senator Douglas of Illinois, returning in full measure every indignity that they together tried to heap upon him. When, therefore, the time approached for the delivery of his greatest masterpiece, *The Crime Against Kansas,* a speech given in 1856 against the deplorable policy of Congress that had made Kansas the scene of bloody civil war, he was prepared to pronounce against these two men a philippic that has never been equalled for its fierce denunciation in the history of modern times.

It was this speech that caused Brooks of South Carolina, a relative of Butler, to sneak into the Senate, and catching Sumner unawares, to assault him with a cane, and beat him upon the head without mercy, before he could offer any defense, until he fell unconscious on the Senate floor. Thereafter, Sumner was incapacitated for public service for a period

of nearly four years, while he suffered excruciating agony under the medical treatment that was given him in Europe, which consisted of pressing against his spine a red-hot iron to burn his flesh. Throughout all these years, however, he remained the official representative of Massachusetts in the Senate, and his vacant chair spoke even more eloquently than he in silent protest against the mistaken "chivalry" of the South and the barbarous power of the slave oligarchy.

At last, he was able to return to the Senate, not quite fully restored to health, on the eve of the Civil War; and, during the four years of conflict, as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, he exerted an influence hardly excelled by that of any other man to preserve peace with Great Britain and France, and to make the North unwilling to accept any compromise until slavery was crushed.

When the war was over, Sumner became one of the most prominent statesmen in Washington during the period of reconstruction, forgetting all the bitter animosity that had been aroused, and exerting all his energies to recreate a feeling of brotherhood between the two sections. One of the most magnanimous acts of his life, in fact, was his resolution introduced into the Senate in 1872, to remove the names of battles from battle-flags of the Republic, in order to efface from the memory of men the remembrance of past differences.

At the time of his death in 1874, he was eulogized by statesmen both from the North and from the South as one of the most heroic leaders of his time, a man worthy to be remembered for his life of service in behalf of those down-trodden by slavery, but, in the end, and through it all, a devoted friend to all who recognized the highest interests of the South.

Charles Sumner was both a statesman and an orator; and, in the history of American eloquence, he will always be given

a conspicuous place; first, as one of the most scholarly and brilliant of the many platform speakers during the period of the War with Mexico; and second, as the greatest champion of the anti-slavery movement in Congress during the decade preceding the Civil War.

Historical Setting of Sumner's Oration on the War System of the Commonwealth of Nations

No war in the history of the United States has produced a greater volume of eloquence on a greater variety of important questions concerning our foreign and domestic policies than did the War with Mexico; for, during this war, such questions as slavery, territorial expansion, and imperialism became the well-worn themes of countless orators from both North and South.

It would have been strange, however, if a war, so odious to many of our people, had not raised in the minds of some the great question of the justification of war itself as a means of settling international disputes. To many, of course, this question did occur; but, to all our leading statesmen, it was taboo as a question involving idealism beyond the comprehension of the times and as a question upon which no practical politician could afford to burn his fingers. It was a question, therefore, that must be discussed, if discussed at all, only by those who had the courage of youth with a spirit that would challenge martyrdom in the cause of a high ideal.

Few men there were even among the rising generation of orators who dared to talk upon such a theme; yet one alone made up for all the deficiencies of others; and that one man was Charles Sumner, who, in 1845, when making his maiden speech on the Fourth-of-July in Boston, on *The True Grandeur of Nations,* startled the world into attention by his declara-

tion that there can be no peace that it not honorable; and there can be no war that is not dishonorable."

Never before or since in the whole realm of oratorical literature has there been such a thorough-going denunciation of the war-system as was contained in this oration by Charles Sumner, which was printed immediately in five successive editions and circulated throughout England and America. Yet Sumner's self-appointed task in delivering such a discourse was almost a thankless one. To be sure, such men as John A. Andrews, the future revered war-governor of Massachusetts, and Theodore Parker, the reform-preacher, praised it highly; but most critics joined in the ill-omened prediction that, by this speech, "the young man had cut his own throat."

How far this was from being true was disclosed, however, by the brilliant career of Sumner as an orator during the next four years; when, joining actively in the anti-slavery movement, he used his talents to denounce, in speech after speech, not only slavery, but war—the Mexican War—as a means of extending the slave-system.

A year after his Fourth-of-July address, the Mexican War was in full swing, and it behooved all men to weigh with care every expression against war which might be a reflection upon their patriotism; yet in that year Sumner again attacked the war-system in his *Phi Beta Kappa Address* at Harvard while eulogizing four distinguished alumni of his Alma Mater.

Then, a year later, when the country had been thrilled by the heroism of our victorious armies in Mexico under the brilliant leadership of General Taylor and of General Scott, we find Sumner once more returning to his theme of the brutality, the futility, and the waste of war, in an address on *Fame and Glory*, delivered at the commencement exercises of Amherst College and of Brown University.

Though Sumner could make no effectual progress against the war-spirit of America that elevated to the presidency in 1849 the most popular general of the Mexican War simply because of his military prowess, he did succeed, nevertheless, in establishing for himself a unique reputation as an orator opposed to war. People could not forget his early statement in the address on *The True Grandeur of Nations,* that "there can be no peace that is not honorable; and there can be no war that is not dishonorable."

It is not strange, therefore, that the American Peace Society invited him to deliver before them in 1849 the annual address of the association. No task could have been better suited to Sumner's genius. Thoroughly prepared by years of study and earnest advocacy of the cause of peace, on this occasion, in his oration entitled *The War System of the Commonwealth of Nations,* he reiterated in compact, simple form all his most telling arguments against war, with a beauty of diction and imagery which, in the most exalted passages, surpassed all his earlier efforts.

This was Sumner's last great speech on the theme of peace. It was warmly applauded at the time by such forward-looking statesmen as John G. Palfrey and William H. Seward; and, in later times, it has come to be regarded as an oration containing some of the brightest gems of Sumner's eloquence.

As one of Sumner's biographers has said, when this address is read today with its appeal for "a Congress of Nations, with a high court of judicature, or arbitration, established by treaties between nations," it seems almost like a prophetic voice of the past foretelling things which were to come; it seems, indeed, like the first great trumpet-call to give reality to hopes that even now must be deferred.

Charles Sumner: The War System of the Commonwealth of Nations
May 28, 1849

Tell me not of the homage which the world yet offers to the military chieftain. Tell me not of the "glory" of war. Tell me not of the "honor" or "fame" won on its murderous fields. All is vanity. It is a blood-red phantom, sure to fade and disappear. They, who strive after it, Ixion-like, embrace a cloud. Though seeming for a while to fill the heavens, cloaking the stars, it must, like the vapors of earth, pass away.

Milton likens the early contests of the Heptarchy to the skirmishes of crows and kites; but God, and the exalted Christianity of the future, must regard all the bloody feuds of men in the same likeness; looking upon Napoleon and Alexander, so far as they were engaged in war, only as monster crows and kites. Thus shall it be, as mankind ascend from the thrall of brutish passions. Nobler ends, by nobler means shall fill the soul. A new standard of excellence shall prevail; and honor divorced from deeds of blood, shall become the inseparable attendant of good works alone. Far better, then, shall it be, even in the judgment of this world, to have been a door-keeper in the House of Peace, than the proudest dweller in the tents of War.

There is a legend of the early Church, that the Savior left his image miraculously impressed upon a napkin which he had placed upon his countenance. The napkin was lost, and men attempted to portray that countenance from the heathen models of Jupiter and Apollo. But the image of Christ is not lost to the world. Clearer than in the precious napkin, clearer than in the colors, or the marble, of modern art, it appears in every virtuous deed, in every act of self-sacrifice, in all mag-

nanimous toil, in every recognition of the Brotherhood of Mankind.

It shall yet be supremely manifest, in unimagined loveliness and serenity, when the Commonwealth of Nations, confessing the true grandeur of peace, shall renounce the wickedness of the war system, and dedicate to labors of beneficence all the comprehensive energies now so fatally absorbed in its support. Then, at least, shall it be seen, that there can be no peace that is not honorable, and there can be no war that is not dishonorable.

Historical Setting of Sumner's Speech on the Crime Against Kansas

The speech by Charles Sumner on *The Crime Against Kansas,* delivered in the United States Senate, on May 19, 1856, stands without a parallel in American history as the most terrible philippic ever heard in modern times, which brought down upon the head of its author the most condign punishment, and fanned into raging flame the anti-slavery sentiment of the North.

This speech was the direct sequel of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 and of the tragic experimentation with the principle of "popular sovereignty" that was promulgated by Douglas in the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill* of that year. Almost immediately upon the passage of this bill there was a wild rush of immigrants into Kansas to claim the Territory for the South as a slave State and for the North as a free State. From Missouri, great hordes of slave-holders pushed over the border and established such cities as Atchison, Lecompton, and Leavenworth; while from New England even greater numbers of freemen were sent west with the help of

Emigrant Aid Societies to establish such cities as Lawrence and Topeka.

Though conditions at first seemed to favor the slave-holders of Missouri, it was not long before the greater resources of the North and the greater ease of moving freemen, in contrast with slaves, gave a decided advantage in numbers to the free settlers. The pro-slave schemers thereupon determined to use desperate measures in order to make the Territory a slave State. In all haste, they called an election for a Territorial legislature; and, by summoning from Missouri a large band of ruffians armed with muskets, pistols, and bowie knives, they succeeded in driving from the polls all Free-Soil citizens. With only three thousand voters in the Territory, they thus brought out a vote of six thousand, which was overwhelmingly in favor of slavery.

An illegal pro-slave legislature was elected, and this body with the utmost precipitation immediately enacted for Kansas, in a lump all the statutes of Missouri, which included the most stringent provisions for the protection of slavery.

Then, not being satisfied with this high-handed procedure, the illegal legislature, as soon as possible, set a date for the election of a delegate to Congress, and placed in nomination for this office one of their own number. On that date, however, the Free-Soil settlers met and elected delegates to a constitutional convention at Topeka, which immediately petitioned Congress for admission to the Union as a free State.

Delegates from both parties went to Congress, but were refused admission; and, when the free-State legislature next met, its officials were indicted for high treason, its members were accused of inciting rebellion, and it was threatened with dissolution by the use of Federal troops under orders from the President.

This was the situation in Kansas when Sumner made his great speech before the Senate. Momentarily, however, matters were growing worse; and, on the very day after this speech, a virtual civil war broke out between the contending factions. The Free-Soil town of Lawrence was sacked and burned by a pro-slave mob, amid scenes of bloodshed. Then, in retaliation for this outrage and for several isolated murders of Free-Soil men, John Brown soon led his followers to commit the barbarous massacre of pro-slave partisans at Pottawatomie. Kansas was given over to anarchy. Guerilla bands traversed its territory, fighting pitched battles whenever they met their opponents, and killing off in a single year through such encounters approximately two hundred persons. In very truth, this frontier Territory was earning its name of "bleeding Kansas," and conditions there met with almost no improvement until the time when the whole nation was convulsed with civil war. Then, and not till then, was Kansas admitted to the Union as a free State.

As Charles Sumner stood up in the Senate in 1856, he seemed to read the future of Kansas with the eye of a prophet. Ever since the passage of the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill,* he had kept in close touch with the whole course of events; and, when Congress was confronted with the problem of recognizing either the free-State party or their opponents as the true representatives of Kansas, he was thoroughly prepared to take a leading part in the discussion.

On March 12, 1856, Douglas proposed to organize a State government in Kansas under the direction of the pro-slave legislature; and William H. Seward moved to substitute a bill for admitting Kansas as a free State under the Topeka constitution. These two propositions brought on a violent debate in which Douglas became bitterly personal whenever he referred

to his opponents. He called his colleague, Trumbull, "a traitor"; he asserted continually that the "black republicans" desired to amalgamate the white and the black races; and he charged Sumner in particular with having assisted in the publication of a libel against him just prior to the debates on the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill* two years before.

During all this discussion, Sumner took almost no part except to defend briefly the Emigrant Aid Societies and to repel some of the most offensive references to himself. He was preparing, however, to deliver at the proper time against his opponents what he himself promised would be "the most thorough philippic ever uttered in a legislative body." Deliberately he retired to his study; and there, while he was aflame with indignation, he wrote out at length the violent speech, which on May 19, 1856, he delivered verbatim to the Senate.

Speaking for hour after hour, through the greater part of two days, he set forth in clear, forcible language the whole history of the situation in Kansas; arraigning the administration for its intrigues and its cowardice; tearing to shreds whatever excuses might be offered in defense of the government's policy; and at last predicting civil war as the inevitable result of the great crime that was being committed against this vast territory.

He was not content, however, merely to denounce the crime. It was necessary also, as he thought, to brand the criminals, and this he did in a manner worthy of Cicero when he flayed before the Roman Senate the arch-criminal Catiline. Much that Sumner said is now almost humorous for its extravagant exaggeration, but there was in it, at that time, no humor, either for him, or for those whom he castigated with more than a scorpion lash. He spoke of Senator Atchison as "stalking like Catiline into the Senate, reeking with conspiracy, and then like

Catiline skulking away to join and provoke the conspirators, 'murderous robbers from Missouri, hirelings, picked from the drunken spew and vomit of an uneasy civilization.'" He spoke of Senator Butler of South Carolina as "the Don Quixote of slavery," and of Senator Douglas of Illinois, as "his squire, Sancho Panza, who was willing to do all his humiliating services." Nothing was too bitter for Sumner to say apparently concerning Butler, and in the midst of a long passage of invective, he spoke of him as a man who "overflows with rage at the simple suggestion that Kansas has applied for admission as a free State, and, with incoherent phrase, discharges the loose expectoration of his speech, now upon her representative, and then upon her people." He was a man, said Sumner, who could "touch nothing, which he does not disfigure"—a man, "incapable of accuracy," and one who could "not open his mouth, but out there flies a blunder."

It would be impossible without lengthy quotations to give any adequate idea of the terrific invective that Sumner used against his opponents, and against Douglas and Butler in particular; but it is safe to say that no such arraignment of so-called crime and criminals had ever been heard before in Congress, not even in the palmiest days of John Randolph himself.

When Sumner had finished, he was immediately denounced by Senator Cass, who said that this was "the most un-American and unpatriotic speech that had ever grated on the ears of the Senate." Douglas followed and spoke of Sumner as a man who should be kicked like a dog in the street. And then Senator Mason of Virginia took the floor to speak of Sumner as a man whom it was "necessary to recognize under a common government as a political equal but one whom to see elsewhere is to shun and despise."

By such remarks as these Sumner was stung to the quick; and, rising with anger, he made that famous retort to Douglas, in which he accused him of being a bully ever ready to use in debate weapons resembling the bowie knife and the bludgeon; in which he accused him of falsehood and of pouring forth venom that had been "sweltering" for years; and in which he finally compared Douglas to that "noisome, squat, and nameless animal"—the skunk. That animal, Sumner insinuated, had been the model for the Senator from Illinois; and "no person," he said, "with the upright form of a man could be allowed in the Senate, without violation of all decency, to switch out from his tongue the perpetual stench of offensive personality."

The excitement produced in the Senate by a speech like this can hardly be imagined; yet even the most hostile critics had to pay homage to the man who gave it. Douglas, himself, in fact, said, during its delivery, to a friend: "Do you hear that man? He may be a fool, but I tell you that he has pluck."

Even the correspondent from a Missouri newspaper felt bound to give it his reluctant praise. "That Sumner displayed great ability," said he, "and showed that, in oratorical talent, he was no unworthy successor of Adams, Webster, and Everett, no one who heard him will deny. In vigor and richness of diction, in felicity and fecundity of illustration, in breadth and completeness of view, he stands unsurpassed. . . . . In his reply to Cass, Douglas, and Mason, who stung him to excitement, he was more successful than at any other time. The collision knocked fire from him; and well it might, for he was abused and insulted as grossly as any man could be; but he replied successfully to the unmeasured vituperation of Douglas, and the aristocratic and withering hauteur of Mason."

The Northern sympathizers with Sumner, of course, praised

the oration highly. Whittier called it "a grand and terrible philippic, worthy of the great occasion. . . . . It is enough for immortality." And Longfellow said, concerning it, that it was the greatest voice on the greatest subject that has been uttered since we became a nation."

Throughout the South, however, the oration caused a furor. Preston Brooks of South Carolina, a relative of Butler, and a member of the House of Representatives, took it upon himself to avenge the insults that Sumner had given to Butler. At first, he thought of horse-whipping Sumner in some public place, but then he thought better of it, because he feared that Sumner might prove too powerful an antagonist in personal combat. He, therefore, resolved to sneak into the Senate and there, catching Sumner unawares at his desk when the Senate had adjourned, to beat him with a cane. Accompanied by two other men, armed with revolvers, he went about his so-called chivalrous duty; and, after raining several blows on Sumner's head before his victim could extricate himself from his desk, he left him bleeding and unconscious on the Senate floor.

For this cowardly act, Brooks was threatened with expulsion from the House, but the necessary two-thirds vote could not be obtained. He was tried, however, in the Circuit Court of the District, and sentenced to pay a fine of three hundred dollars. Meanwhile, he had resigned his seat in Congress; and, returning to South Carolina, he was not only re-elected to Congress, but was also presented with a wagon-load of canes from friends throughout the South to be cherished by him as mementos of his bravery.

In the North, however, the outrage was denounced as a cowardly assault, unworthy of any one but a bully and a thug. The governor of Massachusetts recommended that the legisla-

ture pay all expenses of Sumner's illness, but Sumner responded by saying that—"Whatever Massachusetts can give, let it be given to suffering Kansas." When asked how he felt toward Brooks, Sumner said: "Only as a brick that should fall upon my head from a chimney. He was the unconscious agent of a malign power."

From this assault, Sumner did not recover for four long years; and, during that period, his vacant seat in the Senate gave eloquent testimony to the outraged sensibilities of the North, being to all who beheld it a constant reminder of the brave words with which Sumner had denounced the moral wrong of slavery and the unspeakable crime of spreading it throughout all the nation's Territories, in defiance of their people, and, as he said, against the laws of God and man.

Charles Sumner: The Crime Against Kansas
May 19-20, 1856

I. A Crime Vast Beyond Comparison in History

Mr. President: You are now called to redress a great transgression. Seldom in the history of nations has such a question been presented, involving, as it does, liberty in a broad territory, and also involving the peace of the whole country, with our good name in history forever more.

Take down your map, sir, and you will find that the Territory of Kansas, more than any other region, occupies the middle spot of North America, equally distant from the Atlantic on the east, and the Pacific on the west; from the frozen waters of Hudson's Bay on the north, and the tepid Gulf Stream on the south, constituting the precise territorial center of the whole vast continent. To such advantages of situation, on the very highway between two oceans, are added a soil of unsurpassed richness, and a fascinating, undulating beauty of

surface, with a health-giving climate, calculated to nurture a powerful and generous people, worthy to be a central pivot of American institutions. A few short months only have passed since this spacious and mediterranean country was open only to the savage, who ran wild in its woods and prairies; and now it has already drawn to its bosom a population of freemen larger than Athens crowded within her historic gates, when her sons, under Miltiades, won liberty for mankind on the field of Marathon; more than Sparta contained when she ruled Greece, and sent forth her devoted children, quickened by a mother's benediction, to return with their shields, or on them; more than Rome gathered on her seven hills, when, under her kings, she commenced that sovereign sway, which afterward embraced the whole earth; more than London held, when, on the fields of Crécy and Agincourt, the English banner was carried victoriously over the chivalrous hosts of France.

Against this Territory, thus fortunate in position and population, a crime has been committed, which is without example in the records of the past. Not in plundered provinces or in the cruelties of selfish governors will you find its parallel; and yet there is an ancient instance, which may show at least the path of justice. In the terrible impeachment by which the great Roman orator has blasted through all time the name of Verres, amidst charges of robbery and sacrilege, the enormity which most aroused the indignant voice of his accuser, and which still stands forth with strongest distinctness, arresting the sympathetic indignation of all who read the story, is, that away in Sicily he had scourged a citizen of Rome—that the cry, "I am a Roman citizen," had been interposed in vain against the lash of the tyrant governor. Other charges were that he had carried away productions of art, and that he had violated the sacred shrines. It was in the presence of the Roman Senate that this arraignment proceeded; in a temple of

the Forum; amidst crowds—such as no orator had ever before drawn together—thronging the porticos and colonnades, even clinging to the house-tops and neighboring slopes—and under the anxious gaze of witnesses summoned from the scene of crime. But an audience grander far—of higher dignity—of more various people, and of wider intelligence—the countless multitude of succeeding generations, in every land, where eloquence has been studied, or where the Roman name has been recognized,—has listened to the accusation, and throbbed with condemnation of the criminal.

Sir, speaking in an age of light, and a land of constitutional liberty, where the safeguards of elections are justly placed among the highest triumphs of civilization, I fearlessly assert that the wrongs of much abused Sicily, thus memorable in history, were small by the side of the wrongs of Kansas, where the very shrines of popular institutions, more sacred than any heathen altar, have been desecrated; where the ballot box, more precious than any work, in ivory or marble, from the cunning hand of art, has been plundered; and where the cry, "I am an American citizen," has been interposed in vain against outrage of every kind, even upon life itself. Are you against sacrilege? I present it for your execration. Are you against robbery? I hold it up to your scorn. Are you for the protection of American citizens? I show you how their dearest rights have been cloven down, while a tyrannical usurpation has sought to install itself on their very necks!

II. The Crime and the Criminal

This enormity, vast beyond comparison, swells to dimensions of wickedness which the imagination toils in vain to grasp, when it is understood that, for the purpose of adding to the power of slavery in the national government, there are

hazarded the horrors of intestine feud, not only in this distant Territory, but everywhere throughout the country. Already the muster has begun. The strife is no longer local, but national. Even now, while I speak, portends hang on all the arches of the horizon threatening to darken the broad land, which already yawns with the mutterings of civil war. The fury of the propagandists of slavery, and the calm determination of their opponents, are now diffused from the distant Territory over widespread communities, and the whole country, in all its extent—marshalling hostile divisions, and foreshadowing a strife which, unless happily averted by the triumph of freedom, will become war—fratricidal, parricidal war—with an accumulated wickedness beyond the wickedness of any war in human annals.

Such is the crime which you are to judge. But the criminal also must be dragged into day, that you may see and measure the power by which all this wrong is sustained. The dependence of the crime against Kansas upon the slave power is so peculiar and important, that I trust to be pardoned while I impress it with an illustration, which to some may seem trivial. It is related in Northern mythology that the god of force, visiting an enchanted region, was challenged by his royal entertainer to what seemed an humble feat of strength—merely, sir, to lift a cat from the ground. The god smiled at the challenge, and, calmly placing his hand under the belly of the animal, with superhuman strength strove, while the back of the feline monster arched far upward, even beyond reach, and one paw actually forsook the earth, until at last the discomfited divinity desisted; but he was little surprised at his defeat when he learned that this creature, which seemed to be a cat, and nothing more, was not merely a cat, but that it belonged to, and was a part of, the great Terrestrial Serpent,

which, in its innumerable folds, encircled the whole globe. Even so the creature, whose paws are now fastened upon Kansas, whatever it may seem to be, constitutes in reality a part of the slave power, which in its loathsome folds, is now coiled about the whole land. Thus do I expose the extent of the present contest, where we encounter not merely local resistance, but also the unconquered arm behind.

III. Ridicule and Defiance of Butler and Douglas

Such is the crime, and such the criminal, which it is my duty in this debate to expose, and, by the blessing of God, this duty shall be done completely to the end.

I must say something in response to what has fallen from Senators who have raised themselves to eminence on this floor in championship of human wrongs. I mean the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. Butler], and the Senator from Illinois [Mr. Douglas], who, though unlike as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, yet, like this couple, sally forth together in the same adventure.

The Senator from South Carolina has read many books of chivalry, and believes himself a chivalrous knight, with sentiments of honor and courage. Of course, he has chosen a mistress to whom he has made his vows, and who, though ugly to others, is always lovely to him—I mean the harlot, Slavery. For her, his tongue is always profuse in words. The frenzy of Don Quixote in behalf of his wench, Dulcinea del Toboso, is all surpassed. The asserted rights of Slavery, which shock equality of all kinds, are cloaked by a fantastic claim of equality. If the slave States cannot enjoy what, in mockery of the great fathers of the Republic, he misnames equality under the Constitution—in other words, the full power in the

national Territories to compel fellow-men to unpaid toil, to separate husband and wife, and to sell little children at the auction block—then, sir, the chivalric Senator will conduct the State of South Carolina out of the Union! Heroic knight! Exalted Senator! A second Moses come for a second exodus!

Now, sir, just as the Senator from South Carolina is the Don Quixote, the Senator from Illinois [Mr. Douglas] is the Squire of Slavery, its very Sancho Panza, ready to do all its humiliating offices. Standing on this floor, the Senator issued his rescript, requiring submission to the usurped power in Kansas; and this was accompanied by a manner—all his own—such as befits the tyrannical threat. Very well. Let the Senator try. I tell him now that he cannot enforce any such submission. The Senator, with the slave power at his back, is strong; but he is not strong enough for this purpose. He is bold. He shrinks from nothing. Like Danton, he may cry *"l'audace! l'audace! toujours l'audace!"* but even his audacity cannot accomplish this work. The Senator copies the British officer who, with boastful swagger, said that with the hilt of his sword he would cram the "stamps" down the throats of the American people, and he will meet a similar failure. He may convulse this country with a civil feud. Like the ancient madman, he may set fire to this temple of constitutional liberty, grander than the Ephesian dome; but he cannot enforce obedience to that tyrannical usurpation.

The Senator dreams that he can subdue the North. He disclaims the open threat, but his conduct still implies it. How little that Senator knows himself or the strength of the cause which he persecutes! He is but a mortal man; against him is an immortal principle. With finite power he wrestles with the infinite, and he must fall. Against him are stronger battalions than any marshalled by mortal arm—the inborn, ineradicable,

invincible sentiments of the human heart; against him is nature in all her subtle forces; against him is God. Let him try to subdue these.

IV. Invective Against Senator Butler and South Carolina

With regret, I come again upon the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. Butler], who, omnipresent in this debate, overflowed with rage at the simple suggestion that Kansas had applied for admission as a State; and, with incoherent phrases, discharged the loose expectoration of his speech, now upon her representative, and then upon her people. There was no extravagance of the ancient parliamentary debate, which he did not repeat; nor was there any possible deviation from truth which he did not make, with so much of passion, I am glad to add, as to save him from the suspicion of intentional aberration. But the Senator touches nothing which he does not disfigure—with error, sometimes of principle, sometimes of fact. He shows an incapacity of accuracy, whether in stating the Constitution, or in stating the law, whether in the details of statistics or the diversions of scholarship. He cannot ope his mouth but out there flies a blunder.

It is against the people of Kansas, however, that the sensibilities of the Senator are particularly aroused. Coming as he announces, "from a State"—ay, sir, from South Carolina—he turns with lordly disgust from this newly-formed community, which he will not recognize even as a "body politic."

Pray, sir, by what title does he indulge this egotism? South Carolina, to be sure, is old; and Kansas is young. South Carolina, to be sure, counts by centuries; and Kansas counts by years. But a beneficent example may be born in a day; and I venture to say, that against the two centuries of the older "State," may be already set the two years of trial, evolv-

ing corresponding virtue in the younger community. In the one, is the long wail of slavery; in the other, the hymns of freedom.

Were the whole history of South Carolina blotted out of existence, from its very beginning down to the day of the last election of the Senator to his present seat on this floor, civilization might lose—I do not say how little; but surely less than it has already gained by the example of Kansas, in its valiant struggle against oppression, and in the development of a new science of emigration. Ah, sir, I tell the Senator that Kansas, welcomed as a free State, will be a "ministering angel" to the Republic, when South Carolina, in the cloak of darkness which she hugs, "lies howling."

V. The Retort to Douglas

Mr. President, to the Senator from Illinois, I should willingly leave the privilege of the common scold—the last word; but I will not leave to him, in any discussion with me, the last argument, or the last semblance of it. He has crowned the audacity of this debate by venturing to rise here and calumniate me. He has said that I came here, took an oath to support the Constitution, and yet determined not to support a particular clause in that Constitution. To that statement, I give to his face, the flattest denial. When it was made on a former occasion on this floor by the Senator from South Carolina, I then repelled it. Here is what I said to the Senator from South Carolina:

"This Senator was disturbed, when to his inquiry, personally, pointedly, and vehemently addressed to me, whether I would join in returning a fellow-man to slavery?—I exclaimed, 'Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?' "

You will observe that the inquiry of the Senator from South

Carolina was whether I should join in returning a fellow-man to slavery. It was not whether I would support any clause of the Constitution of the United States—far from it.

Sir, this is the Senate of the United States, an important body, under the Constitution, with great powers. Its members are justly supposed, from age, to be above the intemperance of youth, and from character to be above the gusts of vulgarity. They are supposed to have something of wisdom. Let the Senator bear these things in mind, and let him remember hereafter that the bowie knife and bludgeon are not the proper emblems of senatorial debate. Let him remember that the swagger of Bob Acres and the ferocity of the Malay cannot add dignity to this body. The Senator has gone on to infuse into his speech the venom which has been sweltering for months—ay, for years; and he has alleged facts that are entirely without foundation, in order to heap upon me some personal obloquy. I will not go into the details which have flowed out so naturally from his tongue. I only brand them to his face as false. I say, also, to that Senator, and I wish him to bear it in mind, that no person with the upright form of man can be allowed—(Hesitation.)

Mr. Douglas:—Say it.

Mr. Sumner:—I will say it—no person with the upright form of man can be allowed, without violation to all decency, to switch out from his tongue the perpetual stench of offensive personality. Sir, that is not a proper weapon of debate, at least, on this floor. The noisome, squat, and nameless animal, to which I now refer, is not a proper model for an American Senator. Will the Senator from Illinois take notice?

Mr. Douglas:—I will; and therefore will not imitate you, sir.

Mr. Sumner:—I did not hear the Senator.

Mr. Douglas:—I said that, if that be the case, I would certainly never imitate you in that capacity, recognizing the force of the illustration.

Mr. Sumner:—Mr. President, again the Senator has switched his tongue, and again he fills the Senate with its offensive odor!

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF CHARLES SUMNER—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Sumner: *The True Grandeur of Nations* (1845)—See Sumner's *Orations and Speeches* (1850) Vol. I; *Works of Charles Sumner* (15 vols. 1870-1883).
2. Sumner: *Fame and Glory* (1847)—See *Orations and Speeches* Vol. I; also complete works.
3. Sumner: *White Slavery in the Barbary States* (1847)—See complete works.
4. Sumner: *The War System of the Commonwealth of Nations* (1849)—See *Orations and Speeches* (1850) II, 1-106; also complete works.
5. Sumner: *Freedom National, Slavery Sectional* (1852)—See Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) II, 268-340.
6. Sumner: *The Crime against Kansas* (1856)—See Johnston and Woodburn III, 88-120; Depew's *Library of Oratory* (1902) VIII, 262-284; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) V, 1952-1969; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) IX, 160-173; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) X, 150-160.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Smith's *Political History of Slavery;* Von Holst's *Constitutional History of U. S.;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America;* Spring's *Kansas.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Douglas, Stephen A.—See biographies by Sheahan, Johnson, Carr, and Willis.
Sumner, Charles—See biographies by Chaplin and Chaplin, Grimke, Dawes, Storey, and Haynes.

See also eulogies of Charles Sumner by Carl Schurz in Bancroft's *Speeches, etc., of Schurz* (1913) III, 2-72; and by L. Q. C. Lamar in Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VIII, 767-773.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Sumner's *The War System of the Commonwealth of Nations*

I. What internal evidence is there that Sumner was familiar with: (1) *Ecclesiastes,* 12:8; (2) *Psalms,* 84:10; (3) *Luke,* 22:17-20; (4) *John,* 20:7?

II. What were: (1) the token of homage paid by America on March 4, 1849, to a military chieftain; (2) the Heptarchy; (3) some great wars of history that may be fairly likened to the struggles of monster crows and kites?

III. Who were: (1) Ixion; (2) Napoleon; (3) Alexander?

On Sumner's *The Crime against Kansas*

I. What is the meaning of: (1) *l'audace! l'audace! toujours l'audace!*—See Bryan's *World Famous Orations,* VII, 130-131; (2) body politic?

II. What significance has the statement, *I am an American citizen?*—See, for partial answer, the first ten amendments to Constitution.

III. What internal evidence is there that Sumner was familiar with: (1) *Acts,* 22:24-30; 23:27; 25:10-11; 26:32; (2) *Genesis,* 32:24-28; (3) Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* Act I, Scene I; (4) *Book of Second Kings,* 8:13; (5) Sheridan's *The Rivals*—See cast of characters.

IV. What internal evidence is there that Sumner overlooked the career of Warren Hastings?—See Macaulay's *Essay;* also Burke and Sheridan on Hastings in Bryan's *World's Fam. Orations,* VI, 50-58; 77-98.

V. Who were: (1) Miltiades; (2) the kings of Rome; (3) the great Roman orator; (4) Verres—See Yonge's translations; (5) the Scandinavian god of force; (6) Don Quixote—See Wheeler's *Dictionary of Noted Names of Fiction;* (7) Sancho Panza—See Wheeler; (8) Danton; (9) Herostratus—See Britannica; (10) Bob Acres—See Wheeler.

VI. What were: (1) the seven hills of Rome; (2) the population of Kansas in 1856; (3) the Ephesian dome; (4) extravagances of ancient parliamentary debate—See Cicero's *De Oratore,* Sections 37-38; Mathews's *Orators and Oratory,* 38; (5) the occasion for Sumner's attack on Butler—See Rhodes's *Hist. of U. S.,* II, 135-137; Johnston and Woodburn's *Am. Orations,* III, 358-360; (6) the new science of emigration—See Storey's Sumner, 131-132; *Beecher's Bibles* in Abbott's *H. W. Beecher;* (7) the retorts to Sumner of Cass, Douglas, and Mason—See Storey, 142-143; (8) the clause of the Constitution that Sumner was charged with not being willing to support?

VII. What was the date of: (1) the battle of Marathon; (2) the beginning of Sparta's rule over Greece; (3) the battle of Crecy; (4) the battle of Agincourt; (5) the beginning of Rome's sovereign sway? See Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World.*

Dictionary Studies from Charles Sumner

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. beneficence 2. commonwealth 3. comprehensive 4. feuds 5. kites 6. magnanimous 7. manifest 8. monster 9. renounce 10. thrall 11. vanity 12. virtuous.

1. aberration 2. arraignment 3. ay 4. calumniate 5. chivalric 6. colonnades 7. cunning 8. desecrated 9. diffused 10. discomfited 11. diversion 12. enormity 13. execration 14. exodus 15. feline 16. fratricidal 17. humble 18. ineradicable 19. inquiry 20. intestine 21. mediterranean 22. noisome 23. obloquy 24. parricidal 25. portends 26. propagandists 27. recognized 28. rescript 29. sacrilege 30. sensibilities 31. statistics 32. swelter 33. terrestrial 34. transgression 35. undulating 36. usurped 37. venom.

CHAPTER XIII

WENDELL PHILLIPS

The Position of Phillips Among Contemporary Orators

At no time in the history of American eloquence has there been an orator who remained so long and so conspicuously in the public eye as did Wendell Phillips. Those, perhaps, who have the next longest records of achievement are Clay, Webster, and Calhoun, who were active for approximately forty years from the War of 1812 down through the Compromise of 1850; but the record of Wendell Phillips surpasses even the records of these great orators, for he was conspicuously active in the field of eloquence, at least four years longer than they, through approximately forty-four years, from 1837 down to 1881.

This conspicuous platform orator began his work at a time when John Quincy Adams was the chief exponent of anti-slavery action in Congress, and when William Ellery Channing, the pulpit orator of Boston, was the principal platform speaker for the anti-slavery cause; at a time when the whole South, with John C. Calhoun as its spokesman, had become frightened over the Nat Turner slave-uprising in Virginia, at the consequences of emancipation of the negro slaves in the British West Indies, and at the development of abolition sentiment in the North created by William Lloyd Garrison; when Calhoun pronounced slavery to be "a positive good," and then attempted to deny to Abolitionists the use of the mails and the right of petition to Congress; and when Daniel Webster, meeting Calhoun's theories squarely in the Senate, upheld the

Abolitionists' right of petition, and soon, thereafter, in Niblo's Garden, warned people against any attempt to deprive Abolitionists of the right of free speech.

To inspire Phillips with a passion for the world-wide anti-slavery movement, there was the oratory of William Wilberforce in England, which, in 1807, brought about Parliamentary legislation for the suppression of the African slave-trade, and which, in 1833, brought about the abolition of slavery throughout the British West Indies.

No inconsiderable influence was brought to bear on Phillips also by the oratory he heard at the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840, and at the same time from hearing the superb eloquence of Ireland's champion of freedom, Daniel O'Connell.

Throughout the decade of the forties, Phillips lacked the conspicuous place occupied by political orators; because he worked among the humbler elements of society as a platform orator on the Lyceum circuit, and all the so-called respectable elements of society shunned him and his associates. Others, with Whig principles, like Choate, Webster, Everett, Corwin, and Seward, held the center of the stage without attempting to make anti-slavery doctrine the core of their political philosophy. Seward, for example, became conspicuous for his defense of William Freeman, a negro, charged with murder, and tried in the courts of New York State; Everett attempted, on the platform, to promote the alluring, but always hopeless, scheme of sending back American negroes to colonize and civilize their fellow-blacks in Africa; and Choate, Webster, and Corwin contented themselves with combating the extension of American slavery into the South-West by opposing the annexation of Texas, and the acquisition of vast territories from Mexico, which were to be devoted to this purpose.

Then came the Free-Soil party, organized in 1848 with the sole object of keeping slavery out of the Territories on the principle of the *Wilmot Proviso;* and this party, with Sumner as its principal spokesman, because it secured so many adherents among the anti-slavery elements of society, and because it refused to advocate the extreme Abolition point-of-view, tended for a while to keep such men as Garrison, Parker, and Phillips in the background.

But, in the decade of the fifties, Phillips came into his own. The Compromise of 1850, with the *Fugitive Slave Law,* the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill* with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854, the civil war in Kansas in 1856, the Dred Scott decision in 1857, and the John Brown raid at Harper's Ferry in 1859, were just as effective in promoting Abolition sentiment as they were in bolstering up, first the Free-Soil, and then the Republican, party.

Hence, in the fifties, there were at the front such great names in oratory, as those of Sumner, Chase, Seward, Douglas, and Lincoln; but none was more conspicuous than that of Wendell Phillips, who never appeared in Congress or in the national government, but who, nevertheless, was the supreme agitator of the times, the man whom every conservative leader feared, who wielded his power wholly from the platform and in the presence of hostile mobs.

In the decade of the sixties, Phillips retained his position of pre-eminence among the radical anti-slavery platform orators, but never in alliance with the politicians or the statesmen. Always and constantly, he stood for but one thing—to force the hand of unwilling executives and legislators to bring about emancipation and to secure equal rights between whites and blacks.

Then, in the reconstruction period, and throughout the

decade of the seventies, Phillips continued to occupy a foremost position among reformers, agitators, and orators; while Henry Ward Beecher, Phillips Brooks, Carl Schurz, James G. Blaine, Lucius Q. C. Lamar, Robert G. Ingersoll, James A. Garfield, Roscoe Conkling, Benjamin H. Hill, and George William Curtis, were either establishing, or carrying forward, their brilliant reputations for eloquence.

To be regarded as the peer of all these great orators, in decade after decade of American history, was no ordinary accomplishment. It was, in fact, one of the most remarkable achievements in the world's history; and, hence, there is good reason to say that Wendell Phillips, like Daniel Webster, may claim a place in the Pantheon of the world's most eloquent orators.

The Life of Wendell Phillips

Wendell Phillips was the greatest platform orator of the Abolition movement in America. Ante-dating all other great orators associated with this movement, he early placed himself in the very forefront of the battle for emancipation, with William Lloyd Garrison, as an uncompromising leader of the most extreme anti-slavery group of agitators, and there maintained himself for three decades down through the Civil War, until the great object of his lifetime was attained.

This man, whose powers of eloquence have rarely been equalled, and whose fame as an orator is scarcely excelled even by that of Webster, was born in Boston, in the year 1811 —the son and heir of one of New England's most wealthy and cultured families.

After attending the famous Boston Latin School, he entered Harvard with a reputation for school-boy eloquence that won

for him there every honor that his fellow-students could bestow. Then, upon graduation, he studied law in the Harvard Law School, and in 1834 was admitted to the bar.

Law, however, was too dull and too dry to become with him, as it was for a time with Sumner, an all-absorbing passion. From the beginning, it failed to satisfy his craving to be of service to his fellow-men; and, accordingly, he devoted much of his time to the study of literature and of politics, following with keen interest the various movements about him that tended toward social reform.

One day, as he sat in his office, he beheld from the window a scene in the street below that was destined to change the whole course of his career. This scene, almost unprecedented in history, was that of a Boston mob composed of men in broad-cloth, dragging through the streets the Abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, with a rope around his waist, amid cries of —"Lynch him!"—and "Hang him!"—until, for his protection, the mayor was obliged to lodge him in the city jail. This incident set Phillips to thinking; and, thoroughly shocked, as he was, at such an outrage to the constitutional right of free speech, he became at once a convert to the cause of Abolition.

Two years later, in 1837, when he was only twenty-six years of age, he made his début as an anti-slavery orator, before the riotous mass-meeting in Faneuil Hall, assembled to pass resolutions on the murder of the Abolitionist, Lovejoy, at Alton, Illinois. Wholly without preparation, he delivered on that occasion an oration that is justly regarded as one of the three or four greatest triumphs in the history of American oratory; and, henceforth, he was regarded throughout the country as one of the most brilliant and powerful orators in the Abolition movement.

In the following year, he prepared for the Lyceum platform a lecture on the subject of *The Lost Arts,* which, during the next two or three decades, he delivered more than two thousand times before delighted audiences in almost every Northern State. This lecture, he turned to account, however, very skillfully in behalf of the Abolition movement, by securing through it a favorable impression among his Lyceum audiences, and then returning on a second invitation he gave them a discourse on the subject of slavery. When, at last, this lecture had acquired greater fame than almost any other platform utterance, he used it also in this way:—he offered to each Lyceum committee the privilege of hearing him speak on this subject for one hundred dollars, or of hearing him speak on an anti-slavery subject for nothing.

By becoming an outspoken leader among the anti-slavery agitators in Boston, Phillips suffered a self-imposed ostracism from the cultured and aristocratic circles of society in which he had been accustomed to mingle; but the snubs and slights that he received only made him the more determined to move heaven and earth in the cause of Abolition. Having an independent income, he retired from the practice of law, and undertook to become simply and solely an orator, agitating everywhere and incessantly for reform, not merely in respect to slavery, but also in support of every other forward-looking movement of the times.

He took his work so seriously that, in 1842, he, like other extreme Abolitionists, began to denounce the Constitution of the United States as a pro-slavery document, which, as a lawyer, he could not take an oath to uphold, and under which he refused to hold any public office or even to vote for any public official. This extreme position brought down upon him the wrath of both North and South; but he continued, neverthe-

less, calmly to voice his views, and finally came to advocate a dissolution of the Union as the only means of ridding the nation of the curse of slavery.

Phillips knew better than any one else how far in advance of the times were the sentiments that he uttered; yet he believed that "the people always mean right, and in the end that they would do right." "I believe," said he, "in the twenty millions to arrange this question of slavery. . . . . Drag it from its concealment and give it to the people; launch it on the age and all will be safe. But there must be no half-declaration of the issue, no compromise with convictions, no concealment of an ugly fact."

Accordingly, Phillips went up and down the land speaking "as no man ever spoke before" to secure the liberation of the slave, facing everywhere the most hostile and prejudiced audiences, yet everywhere overcoming opposition by the magnetic charm of his personality, and by the delightful new mode of conversational speaking that he adopted. "Never was there a more unagitated agitator." The Richmond *Inquirer,* in fact, was led to speak of him "as an infernal machine set to music."

His style of speaking is described best, perhaps, by President Merrick of the Ohio Wesleyan University, when he said: "I went one evening for the first time to hear Wendell Phillips. At the appointed time, a tall, handsome gentleman came on the platform and began talking in a quiet conversational way. I thought he was about to introduce Mr. Phillips, but as he proceeded I was so charmed with him I wanted him to keep on. He did keep on for an hour and a half, and that was Wendell Phillips—a gentleman conversing; and that was the new type of oratory, to produce by quiet means the greatest effect."

Yet back of that quiet manner was an iron determination to bring about a revolution in society. Mobs were sent to

break up his meetings and threaten him with personal violence; but, when they had come under the spell of his eloquence, they were overcome as if by magic. They were, indeed, almost afraid to listen, and, so, frequently, created an atmosphere of pandemonium; but, Phillips, always equal to the occasion, and never so much at home as when riding the storm, at such times, would come to the front of the platform and address the reporters, saying: "Howl on; through these fingers, I speak to thirty millions." The mob, then becoming curious to hear what he was saying, would become quiet and that moment they were conquered. Under the constant threats and maledictions directed against him, almost any other man would have been thoroughly intimidated; and Phillips, himself, when asked before addressing a mob if he were not afraid, replied: "Yes, I tremble with fear; and, if I had my own way, I would run away. But it is my duty, sir, my duty."

No orator ever faced more overwhelming obstacles and lived to see them all overcome; yet it was slow work, requiring patience that would be satisfied with a slight gain here and a slight gain there, accomplished first in winning for colored children the right to attend the public schools of Boston; then in securing for colored people the right to travel in railroad cars in which their tickets entitled them to ride; and finally in securing by violence the rescue of colored people whom the slave-catchers and kidnappers sought to return to the South in bondage.

At the darkest moments of the anti-slavery cause, when the *Fugitive Slave Law* was passed, when the Missouri Compromise was repealed, when Charles Sumner was assaulted in the Senate, when the Dred Scott decision prepared the way for opening the whole Union to slavery, and when John Brown's raid was suppressed, Phillips never lost heart; but on the

contrary seemed to wrench victory from defeat, adding adherents everywhere to the cause of the oppressed from among those who saw their dearest constitutional rights swept away by the slave oligarchy.

During these times, Phillips spared no one in his fierce assaults upon those who would compromise with slavery. Webster, he called "Sir Pertinax McSycophant." Choate was a "political mountebank." And, in scornful derision, he spoke of the "cuckoo lips of Edward Everett."

In one of his most remarkable addresses on *Public Opinion,* delivered in 1852, he said: "Men blame us for the bitterness of our language and the personality of our attacks. It results from our position. The great mass of the people can never be made to stay and argue a long question. They must be made to feel it, through the hides of their idols. When you have launched your spear into the rhinoceros hide of a Webster or Benton, every Whig and Democrat feels it. See to it, when nature has provided you a monster like Webster, that you exhibit him—himself a whole menagerie—throughout the country. It is not often, in the wide world's history, that you see a man so lavishly gifted by nature, and called in the concurrence of events, to a position like that which he occupied on the Seventh of March, surrender his great power, and quench the high hopes of his race. No man, since the age of Luther, has ever held in his hand, so palpably, the destinies and character of a mighty people. He stood like the Hebrew prophet betwixt the living and the dead. He had but to have upheld the cross of common truth and honesty, and the black dishonor of two hundred years would have been effaced forever. He bowed his vassal head to the temptations of the flesh and of lucre. He gave himself up into the lap of the Delilah of slavery, for the mere promise of a nomination, and

the greatest hour of the age was bartered away,—not for a mess of pottage, but for the *promise* of a mess of pottage,—a promise, thank God! which is to be broken. I say, it is not often that Providence permits the eyes of twenty millions of thinking people to behold the fall of another Lucifer, from the very battlements of Heaven, down into that 'lower deep of the lowest deep' of Hell."

By such terrific invective, Phillips shocked the conservative elements of society, but won the great mass of the common people. Throughout the decade of the fifties, in speech after speech, he is described as sowing among the rising generations "the dragon's teeth" of which Sumner spoke in his attack upon Douglas's *Kansas-Nebraska Bill,* "from which sprang the armed men who alone were competent to the accomplishment of the great end to which the most valuable years of his life had been devoted."

In 1852, for example, in another terrific bit of denunciation on *The Surrender of Simms,* he spoke of Webster as the man, "who all his life long has been bowing down to the Slave Power to secure the presidency"; as a man, "who went into Virginia and pledged himself—the recreant New Englander!—to silence on the slave question; a pledge infamous enough in itself, but whose infamy was doubled when he broke it only to speak against the slave on the Seventh of March, 1850"; as a man, who called himself " 'the Whig, the Massachusetts Whig, the Faneuil Hall Whig,' who came home to Massachusetts,—his own Massachusetts, the State he thought he owned, body and soul,— who came home to Massachusetts, and lobbied so efficiently as to secure the election of Charles Sumner to the Senate of the United States."

Then, again, in 1853, when, giving his address on *The Philosophy of the Abolition Movement,* Phillips thus speaks

of the horrors he saw in slavery and in the *Fugitive Slave Law*: "The South," he said, "is one great brothel, where half a million of women are flogged to prostitution, or, worse still, are degraded to believe it honorable. The public squares of half our great cities echo to the wail of families torn asunder at the auction-block; no one of our fair rivers that has not closed over the negro seeking in death a refuge from a life too wretched to bear; thousands of fugitives skulk along our highways, afraid to tell their names, and trembling at the sight of a human being; free men are kidnapped in our streets, to be plunged into the hell of slavery; and now and then one, as if by miracle, after long years, returns to make men aghast with his tale."

The year, 1859, was one in which Phillips was particularly active. When John Brown was preparing for his raid on Harper's Ferry, Phillips returned to his attack on the old Whig statesmen in his lecture on "Idols," saying of Webster, that he was "the disgraced and bankrupt chief of a broken and ruined party"; that "he followed Channing and Garrison a little way, and then turned doughface in the wake of Douglas and Davis"; that "at first, with Algernon Sidney, he declared the best legacy he could leave his children was free speech and the example of using it; and then of Preston S. Brooks and Legree he took lessons in smothering discussion and hunting slaves." And of Choate, Webster's friend, he said: "This is Choate, who made it safe to murder; and of whose health thieves asked before they began to steal."

This address on *Idols* was delivered just twelve days before John Brown's raid; and, then, only two weeks after the raid, in fact, the very night before John Brown was sentenced to be hanged, Wendell Phillips said in a public lecture in Henry Ward Beecher's church in Brooklyn, while talking on the sub-

ject of *Harper's Ferry,* that "the lesson of the hour is insurrection"; that "John Brown has twice as much right to hang Governor Wise, as Governor Wise has to hang him"; that "Harper's Ferry is the Lexington of today"; that "soldiers call Bunker Hill a defeat; but Liberty dates from it, though Warren lay dead on the field"; that "Virginia did not tremble at an old gray-headed man at Harper's Ferry; they trembled at a John Brown in every man's conscience. He had been there many years, and, like that terrific scene which Beckford has drawn for us in his *Hall of Eblis,* where the crowd runs around, each man with an incurable wound in his bosom, and agrees not to speak of it; so the South has been running up and down its political and social life, and every man keeps his right hand pressed on the secret and incurable sore, with an understood agreement, in church and state, that it never shall be mentioned, for fear the great ghastly fabric should come to pieces at the talismanic word. Brown uttered it; cried, 'Slavery is sin! come, all true men, help pull it down,' and the whole machinery trembled to its very base."

Such were the words that Phillips uttered before John Brown was sentenced to be hanged, when men like William H. Seward and Abraham Lincoln were busy repudiating Brown's enterprise, saying that at least he was no Republican, and that his act was that of a madman. Utterly fearless were such words, but how much more fearless was Phillips's conduct when he joined the John Brown funeral escort at New York City, went with it to the burial in Elba, New York, and there preached Brown's funeral sermon.

It was only a year after this event when Lincoln was elected to the presidency and the secession movement began. No one was more rejoiced than Phillips over the election of Lincoln; for, as Phillips said, on November 7, 1860, in his speech en-

titled *Lincoln's Election*: "If the telegraph speaks truth, for the first time in our history the *slave* has chosen a President of the United States. We have passed the Rubicon, for Mr. Lincoln rules today as much as he will after the Fourth of March. It is the moral effect of this victory, not anything which his administration can, or will, probably do, that gives value to this success. Not an Abolitionist, hardly an anti-slavery man, Mr. Lincoln consents to represent an anti-slavery idea. A pawn on the political chessboard, his value is in his position; with fair effort we may soon change him for knight, bishop, or queen, and sweep the board. This position he owes to no merit of his own, but to lives that have roused the nation's conscience, and deeds that have ploughed deep into its heart."

To illustrate how Lincoln's election would soon be Garrison's victory, Phillips said: "In 1842, Lindley had finished the railway at Hamburg, and was to open it, when the great fire broke out. The self-satisfied citizens called the Englishman to see how well their six-penny squirts and old pails could put out the fire. But it raged on, till one quarter of the city was in ruins. 'Mynheer Lindley, what shall we do?' cried the frightened Senators of Hamburg. 'Let me blow up a couple of streets,' he answered. 'Never, never, never.' Another day of flames. 'Mynheer Lindley, blow up the streets and welcome, only save us.' 'Too late,' replied the engineer. 'To do that, I must blow up the Senate-House itself.' They debated an hour, and then said, 'Mynheer Lindley, save us in your own way.' In one hour, the Senate-House was in ruins and the fire ceased. 'Be quiet, Mr. Garrison,' said 1830. 'Don't you see our six-penny Colonization Society, and our old-fashioned pails of church resolves, nicely copied and laid away in vestries? See how we'll put out this fire of slavery.' But it

burned on fiercer, fiercer. 'What shall we do now?' asked startled Whiggery. 'Keep the new States free, abolish slavery in the District, shut the door against Texas.' 'Too much,' said Whiggery; 'we are busy now making Webster president, and proving that Mr. Everett never had an anti-slavery idea.' But the flames roll on. Republicanism proposes to blow up a street or two. No, no; nothing but to blow up the Senate-House will do; and soon frightened Hamburg will cry, 'Mynheer Garrison, Mynheer Garrison, save us on your own terms!' "

Sooner than Phillips dreamed, the movement began which threatened to blow up the Senate-House. South Carolina seceded in December, 1860, and Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, and Georgia followed her example in January. Frantic efforts were made to stop the movement, to preserve the Union, and to maintain the peace. Republican leaders were ready to make all manner of concessions to the South to keep that section in the Union, to guarantee the perpetuation of slavery where it existed, and to enforce the *Fugitive Slave Law* with the utmost vigor. But all in vain; and, at the failure of the statesmen, Phillips publicly rejoiced in the presence of mobs that threatened to lynch him.

Speaking in Theodore Parker's former meeting-house in Boston on January 20, 1861, Phillips said: " 'The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice.' 'The covenant with death' is annulled; 'the agreement with hell' is broken to pieces. The chain which has held the slave system since 1787 is parted. . . . . After drifting, a dreary night of thirty years, before the hurricane, our ship of state is going to pieces on the lee shore of slavery. . . . . Take your distorted Union, your nightmare monster. God made it a law of His universe, that villainy should always be loss; and if you will only not at-

tempt, with your puny efforts, to stand betwixt the inevitable laws of God's kingdom, as you are doing today, and have done for sixty years, by the vigor that the industry of sixteen States has been able to infuse into the sluggish veins of the South, slavery will drop to pieces by the very influence of the competition of the nineteenth century. That is what we mean by Disunion!

"That is my *coercion*! Northern pulpits cannonading the Southern conscience; Northern competition emptying its pockets; educated slaves awaking its fears; civilization and Christianity beckoning the South into their sisterhood. Soon every breeze that sweeps over Carolina will bring to our ears the music of repentance, and even she will carve on her Palmetto, 'We hold this truth to be self-evident,—that all men are created equal!'

"All hail, then, Disunion! 'Beautiful on the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.' "

All Union-men with a clear retrospective view of history may regret these strong, but beautiful, words of Phillips, uttered in January, 1861. Let them rejoice, however, to see the change that came over Phillips, when, after the firing on Fort Sumter and the attack upon Massachusetts soldiers as they marched through Baltimore to protect Lincoln at the capital, he said, in his speech entitled *Under the Flag*: "Many times this winter, here and elsewhere, I have counselled peace,—urged as well as I knew how, the expediency of acknowledging a Southern Confederacy, and the peaceful separation of these thirty-four States. One of the journals announces to you that I come here this morning to retract those opinions. No, not one of them! I need them all,—every word I have spoken this winter,—every act of twenty-five years of my life, to make

the welcome I give this war hearty and hot. Civil war is a momentous evil. It needs the soundest, most solemn justification. I rejoice before God today for every word that I have spoken counselling peace; but I rejoice also with an especially profound gratitude, that now, the first time in my anti-slavery life, I speak under the stars and stripes, and welcome the tread of Massachusetts men marshalled for war.

"Plain words now before the nation goes mad with excitement are every man's duty. The government has waited until its best friends almost suspected its courage or its integrity; but the cannon shot against Fort Sumter has opened the only door out of this hour. There were but two. One was compromise; the other was battle. The integrity of the North closed the first; the generous forbearance of nineteen States closed the other. The South opened this with cannon-shot, and Lincoln shows himself at the door. The war, then, is not aggressive, but in self-defense, and Washington has become the Thermopylae of Liberty and Justice. Rather than surrender that capital, cover every square foot of it with a living body; crowd it with a million men, and empty every bank-vault at the North to pay the cost. Teach the world once for all, that North America belongs to the stars and stripes, and under them no man shall wear a chain.

"During these long and weary weeks, we have waited to hear the Northern conscience assert its purpose. It comes at last. Massachusetts blood has consecrated the pavements of Baltimore, and those stones are now too sacred to be trodden by slaves.

"You and I owe it to those young martyrs, you and I owe it, that their blood shall be the seed of no mere empty triumph, but that the negro shall teach his children to bless them for centuries to come.

"The result is as sure as the throne of God. I believe in the possibility of justice, in the certainty of Union. Years hence, when the smoke of this conflict clears away, the world will see under our banner all tongues, all creeds, all races,—one brotherhood,—and on the banks of the Potomac, the Genius of Liberty, robed in light, four and thirty stars for her diadem, broken chains under her feet, and an olive-branch in her right hand."

Soon after Phillips had given to the world this pro-war utterance, he began to urge upon the government the desirability of enlisting in the Northern armies the thousands upon thousands of negroes who were ready to fight for the cause of freedom; and, for this purpose, he wrote and delivered his most famous anti-slavery lecture, entitled *Toussaint L'Ouverture.*

When, at last, Lincoln promulgated the *Emancipation Proclamation* in 1863, and Congress and the States adopted the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1869, Phillips's work as an agitator seemed complete; but his restless energy soon drove him into other fields of agitation and reform. With great vigor, he undertook to advance the cause of woman suffrage, of temperance, of prison reform, of freedom for Ireland, and of sympathy for the Russian Nihilists; while, at the same time, he advocated labor reforms and reforms in the currency, standing for the first time as a candidate for public office, when, in 1870, he was the nominee of the Labor party for the governorship of Massachusetts.

During the last years of his life, though active in many fields, he continued to be a great favorite on the Lyceum platform, and was acknowledged everywhere to be one of the most accomplished speakers for special occasions. His two greatest addresses in this period were: his *Eulogy of Daniel O'Connell,*

delivered in Boston, in 1875, on the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great Irish patriot; and his Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard, in 1881, on the subject of *The Scholar in a Republic*.

True to his natural instinct, Phillips, on this latter occasion, chose not to speak on some erudite subject that would be pleasing and harmless, but rather on a subject that had been his life-long ideal; namely, the necessity for constant, unremitting agitation; and there, in the presence of Harvard's greatest scholars, he denounced most daringly, most brilliantly, and even most deliciously, the cowardice of scholars in every historic movement for the uplift of the race. His auditors listened in consternation, in amazement, and in awe, which finally yielded to unbounded admiration for the brilliant scholar, standing before them, who, in himself, was a glowing refutation of his own burning words of eloquence.

This speech, which Phillips feared might convert "every tile on Cambridge roofs into a devil hooting at his words," was a fitting climax for his long career of forty-four years of public service. It fully justified the description of his eloquence as given by George William Curtis, when he said, that it "sparkled with the richness of illustration, with apt allusion and historical parallel, with wit and pitiless invective." This speech, in some respects, said Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "was the most remarkable effort of his life,"—and, according to Phillips's biographer, Carlos Martyn, it was "one of the most remarkable of the nineteenth century."

This great speech was Phillips's last memorable utterance. At the time of its delivery, he was seventy years of age, and three years later, in 1884, he died.

Immediately, throughout the civilized world, he was then acknowledged to have been one of the foremost orators of

modern times, distinguished in his later life for his brilliant and scholarly eloquence on the Lyceum and academic platforms, yet always to be remembered for his earlier service to humanity, when, through the darkest periods of the struggle to overthrow slavery, he blazed the way for Sumner and Lincoln, and, by his keen-cutting, hard-hitting eloquence, prepared the nation for the liberation and enfranchisement of its colored population.

Historical Setting of Phillips's Speech on the Murder of Lovejoy

George William Curtis has said that the speech by Wendell Phillips on *The Murder of Lovejoy* was one of the three greatest triumphs of American oratory. It was delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, on December 8, 1837, before an excited mass-meeting that had been called to pass resolutions of protest against the lawless mob that had murdered Lovejoy, on November 7, at Alton, Illinois.

Lovejoy was an Abolitionist, who had set up a printing press at Alton, and who, in an editorial, had fiercely denounced the burning of a negro alive at St. Louis for killing an officer who had attempted to arrest him. For this editorial, Lovejoy's press was attacked and thrown into the river. He, however, could not be frightened; and, when he had set up a second press, this was attacked and destroyed in the same manner. With great difficulty, Lovejoy procured and set up a third press; and, at last, appealed to the mayor for protection, which the mayor was helpless to render. Permission was given to Lovejoy, therefore, to organize a special police force for the protection of his own property. This force of approximately seventy men stood guard, night and day, over Lovejoy's press; and, one night, when Lovejoy was on duty

with only thirty of his band to protect him, he was besieged by an angry mob, that had come across the river from Missouri to attack him for the third time. Cooped up, as he was, within his own buildings, he was twice fired upon by the mob; and then, after a consultation, he determined to return the fire. A veritable fusilade from both sides followed, and the town was given over to anarchy. Lovejoy's buildings were burned; his press was again destroyed; and he himself was shot down like a dog in a vain attempt to uphold in that frontier community his incontestable right to free speech and a free press, which was guaranteed to him as a citizen of a free State and a free country under the Federal Constitution.

When the news of this event reached Boston, the anti-slavery sympathizers there, under the leadership of the famous preacher, William Ellery Channing, petitioned the mayor for the use of Faneuil Hall, in order that they might publicly voice their indignation against this outrage. At first, their petition was refused; but, on a second application, when many additional signatures appeared on their petition, they were granted the use of the hall.

The meeting was called to order by the Honorable Jonathan Phillips, and was addressed by the Rev. Dr. Channing in a brief, but eloquent, plea. Resolutions framed by Channing were then read by the Honorable Benjamin F. Hallet, and were seconded by George S. Hillard, an able lawyer, in a most forcible speech.

Up to this time the meeting had proceeded peacefully, but it was evident that at least one third of those in attendance were openly hostile to its avowed object, and another third were only curious on-lookers who had come prepared to take part in any demonstration with the hope that the gathering would break up in a fracas.

Mr. Hillard had no sooner finished speaking than a commotion was heard in the gallery, and there James T. Austin, the Attorney-General of the State, was seen elbowing his way toward the great gilded eagle over the main entrance. His purpose was manifest. He had come to make a speech that was not a part of the expected program. From that high place, with all the authority of his official standing, he launched into a bold harangue intended to break up the meeting or turn it from its original purpose. He claimed that "there was a conflict of laws between Missouri and Illinois;" he compared the slaves to "a menagerie, with lions, tigers, a hyena, an elephant, and monkeys in plenty;" and then he compared Lovejoy to "one who would break the bars and let loose the caravan to prowl about the street." He talked of the riots of Alton as "akin to the orderly mob which threw the tea into Boston Harbor in 1773;" he declared that "Lovejoy was presumptuous and imprudent and had died as the fool dieth;" and, in direct and insulting allusion to Dr. Channing, he closed by asserting that "a clergyman with a gun in his hand, or one mingling in the debates of a popular assembly, was marvelously out of place."

Immediately, the meeting was thrown into an uproar, and no one seemed able to restore order; but there was in that crowd a young man who had come as a spectator. All his finer feelings of patriotism had been shocked by the speech that he had just heard; and, when no one else came forth to answer it, he determined that he would answer it himself. Accordingly, he got his friends to lift him to the platform; and all aglow with indignation, with no opportunity to weigh his words or prepare his thoughts, he burst into a speech of such sublime invective that he once more made the old "Cradle of Liberty" rock to its foundations under the noble strains of his unpremeditated eloquence.

For language such as that which he had just heard, he declared, "The earth should have yawned and swallowed up the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead!" Hisses and cat-calls greeted him here. Applause and counter-applause shook the building, and pandemonium broke loose. "Take that back!"—"Make him take that back."—"Take back the word *recreant!*"—"He shan't go on till he takes that back!"—came from the crowd; and, then others admiring his audacity, shouted out—"Phillips or nobody"—"Let him go on!" Numerous well-known citizens then came to the platform; and, pleading for silence, they produced some semblance of order.

Phillips then proceeded, scoring point after point against the argument of his adversary, burying him at length under a load of infamy that turned the hisses of the audience upon the Attorney-General and against the doctrines that he had uttered. The mob was conquered; the onlookers, the idlers, the ruffians, and the conscientious objectors, were all swept away by the burning eloquence of this new prophet of freedom, who had burst upon them like a Daniel come to judgment. The speech at last was ended; it was greeted by a veritable whirlwind of applause; and the resolutions, which at first seemed lost, were carried by acclamation with shouts of wild enthusiasm from an overwhelming majority of those who had listened to the words of this inspired orator.

Such was the speech of Wendell Phillips on *The Murder of Lovejoy*—a speech, which George William Curtis says was one of the three greatest triumphs of American oratory. Never said he, since the time when Patrick Henry delivered his "electrical warning to George III," had there been such a triumph in the annals of American speech; and never was there to be another like it until Lincoln spoke on the field of Gettysburg.

This speech was, according to Curtis, much more than a

mere manifestation of eloquence; it was, in fact, what Webster would have called "something higher and greater than eloquence"—it was the embodiment of action, the most noble, the most sublime, the most godlike action; and, like the oratory of Henry in the Revolution and of Lincoln in the Civil War,—when these speakers were lifted to adequate expression by a supreme emotion, by a sentiment that was to mould a people anew,—it is said to have transmitted "unextinguished the torch of an eloquence which has roused nations and has utterly changed the whole course of history."

Wendell Phillips: On the Murder of Lovejoy
December 8, 1837

Mr. Chairman: We have met for the freest discussion of these resolutions, and the events which gave rise to them. I hope I shall be permitted to express my surprise at the sentiments of the last speaker, surprise not only at such sentiments from such a man, but at the applause they have received within these walls.

A comparison has been drawn between the events of the Revolution and the tragedy at Alton. We have heard it asserted here, in Faneuil Hall, that Great Britain had a right to tax the colonies, and we have heard the mob at Alton, the drunken murderers of Lovejoy, compared to those patriot fathers who threw the tea overboard! Fellow-citizens, is this Faneuil Hall doctrine?

The mob at Alton were met to wrest from a citizen his just rights—met to resist the laws. We have been told that our fathers did the same; and the glorious mantle of Revolutionary precedent has been thrown over the mobs of our day.

To make out their title to such a defense, the gentleman

says that the British Parliament had a *right* to tax these colonies. It is manifest that, without this, his parallel falls to the ground, for Lovejoy had stationed himself within constitutional bulwarks. He was not only defending the freedom of the press, but he was under his own roof, in arms with the sanction of the civil authority. The men who assailed him went against and over the laws.

The *mob,* as the gentleman terms it—mob, forsooth! certainly, we sons of the tea-spillers are a marvelously patient generation!—the "orderly mob" which assembled in the Old South to destroy the tea, were met to resist, not the laws, but illegal enactments. Shame on the American who calls the tea tax and the stamp act *laws!* Our fathers resisted, not the King's prerogative, but the King's usurpation.

To find any other account, you must read our Revolutionary history upside down. Our State archives are loaded with arguments of John Adams to prove the taxes laid by the British Parliament unconstitutional—beyond its power. It was not until this was made out that the men of New England rushed to arms. The arguments of the Council Chamber and the House of Representatives preceded and sanctioned the contest.

To draw the conduct of our ancestors into a precedent for mobs, for a right to resist laws we have ourselves enacted, is an insult to their memory. The difference between the excitements of those days and our own, which the gentleman, in kindness to the latter, has overlooked, is simply this: the men of that day went for the right, as secured by the laws. They were the people rising to sustain the laws and constitution of the Province. The rioters of our days go for their own wills, right or wrong.

Sir, when I heard the gentleman lay down principles which

place the murderers of Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips [pointing to the portraits in the hall] would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American—the slanderer of the dead. The gentleman said that he should sink into insignificance if he dared to gainsay the principles of these resolutions. Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up.

Fellow-citizens, I cannot take back my words. Surely, the Attorney-General, so long and so well known here, needs not the aid of your hisses against one so young as I am—my voice never before heard within these walls!

The gentleman says Lovejoy was presumptuous and imprudent—he "died as the fool dieth." And a reverend clergyman of the city tells us that no citizen has a right to publish opinions disagreeable to the community! If any mob follows such publication, on *him* rests the guilt. He must wait, forsooth, till the people come up to it and agree with him!

This libel on liberty goes on to say that the want of right to speak as we think is an evil inseparable from republican institutions! If this be so, what are they worth? Welcome the despotism of the Sultan, where one knows what he may publish and what he may not, rather than the tyranny of this many-headed monster, the mob, where we know not what we may do or say, till some fellow-citizen has tried it, and paid for the lesson with his life.

This clerical absurdity chooses as a check for the abuses of the press, not the *law,* but the dread of a mob. By so doing, it deprives not only the individual and the minority of their rights, but the majority also, since the expression of *their* opinion may sometime provoke disturbances from the minority. A few men may make a mob as well as many. The majority,

then, have no right, as Christian men, to utter their sentiments, if by any possibility it may lead to a mob! Shades of Hugh Peters and John Cotton, save us from such pulpits!

Imprudent to defend the liberty of the press! Why? Because the defense was unsuccessful? Does success gild crime into patriotism, and the want of it change heroic self-devotion to imprudence? Was Hampden imprudent when he drew the sword and threw away the scabbard? Yet he, judged by that single hour, was unsuccessful. After a short exile, the race he hated sat again upon the throne.

Imagine yourself present when the first news of Bunker Hill battle reached a New England town. The tale would have run thus: "The patriots are routed,—the redcoats victorious,—Warren lies dead upon the field." With what scorn would that Tory have been received, who should have charged Warren with *imprudence!* who should have said that, bred a physician, he was "out of place" in that battle, and "died as the fool dieth." How would the intimation have been received, that Warren and his associates should have waited a better time? But if success be indeed the only criterion of prudence, *Respice finem,*—wait till the end!

Presumptuous to assert the freedom of the press on American ground! Is the assertion of such freedom before the age? So much before the age as to leave one no right to make it, because it displeases the community? Who invents this libel on his country? It is this very thing which entitles Lovejoy to greater praise. The disputed right which provoked the Revolution—taxation without representation—is far beneath that for which he died.

One word, gentlemen. As much as *thought* is better than money, so much is the cause in which Lovejoy died nobler than a mere question of taxes. James Otis thundered in this hall when the King did but touch his *pocket.* Imagine, if

you can, his indignant eloquence, had England offered to put a gag upon his *lips*.

I am glad, sir, to see this crowded house. It is good for us to be here. When liberty is in danger, Faneuil Hall has the right, it is her duty, to strike the key-note for these United States. I am glad, for one reason, that remarks such as those to which I have alluded have been uttered here. The passage of these resolutions, in spite of this opposition, led by the Attorney-General of the Commonwealth, will show more clearly, more decisively, the deep indignation with which Boston regards this outrage.

Historical Setting of Phillips's Lecture "Toussaint L'Ouverture"

Toussaint L'Ouverture, a Lyceum lecture, delivered more than a thousand times by Wendell Phillips in almost every community of the North during the Civil War, is generally recognized as the most brilliant and fascinating popular address produced by the great coterie of anti-slavery Lyceum orators.

This lecture, Phillips gave for the first time in New York and then in Boston in the fall of 1861 with the purpose of convincing his popular audiences that the negro should be given an opportunity to fight in the Northern armies for the preservation of the Union and for the ultimate emancipation of his race, which Phillips foresaw as a necessary consequence of the war.

That the Northern people should have been opposed to any such policy is now most difficult for us to understand, and yet such was the case. This was to be a white man's war. To secure the loyalty of War Democrats in the North and of the entire population of the border States, like Delaware, Mary-

land, and Kentucky, the administration in Washington did not wish to give the impression that the object of the war was to free the slaves, but that it was, rather, solely to preserve the Union. Had any other argument been lacking, however, to reject negroes as recruits, it would have been provided in the deep distrust everywhere of the negro's capacity to be a soldier.

At first, the Federal government disdained to accept enlistments from among the free negroes of the North; and it even returned under the *Fugitive Slave Law,* escaped slaves who came within the Federal lines. At last, however, it adopted General Butler's theory that a slave, as property, was contraband of war; and, accordingly, it began to refuse the return of fugitives and to use negroes, as the South did from the outset, as laborers to dig trenches and to perform all manner of necessary manual work about the army camps.

This solution of the general problem, however, was most unsatisfactory to such anti-slavery leaders as Phillips, who desired complete equality of opportunity between the races, and it became more and more unsatisfactory after Lincoln's *Emancipation Proclamation* to take effect January 1, 1863, when the anti-slavery leaders looked forward to the struggle that must be waged to confer upon the negro the right of suffrage and other civil rights of complete equality.

To secure the acceptance of negro regiments, therefore, such as those that fought so valiantly at Fort Wagner, Port Hudson, and Mobile, and to prepare the people for such enactments as the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, Phillips prepared his lecture on Toussaint L'Ouverture, which he spoke of, as "at once a biography and an argument."

This lecture gives the story, as only Phillips could give it, of a Haitian negro, of unmixed blood, whose father had been

stolen from Africa, and who himself had been raised as a slave under a kind master, but who was called upon to lead the blacks in their revolution upon the island, who drove off the French, the British, and the Spaniards, and who set himself up as emperor, only to be treacherously seized by French officers and carried off to die of starvation in a French prison.

Throughout this lecture, Phillips undertakes to weigh carefully the capacities and achievements of the greatest leaders of the black, and the white, races; and, taking into consideration the adverse conditions under which Toussaint L'Ouverture labored, Phillips makes out a baffling case for placing the negro, as a military genius and statesman, on a pedestal that is quite the equal of that upon which any white man has stood.

The effects produced by this lecture, when delivered by Phillips to various audiences, were little short of miraculous. Men, filled with race prejudice, were rendered powerless by it to do aught but give it their thunderous applause; and, in one instance, when Phillips spoke in Philadelphia before an audience that included a famous mob-leader who had come purposely to break up his meeting, the appeal of this address was so alluring that the mob-leader forgot his object and listened spell-bound throughout its delivery.

As Carlos Martyn says in his biography of Phillips, the delivery of this address was an "enchantment." Yet without being privileged to hear Phillips himself, generations of readers, coming after him, have found in this discourse a subtle charm, a wealth of historical reference, a keen analysis, a storehouse of epigrams, and a splendor of diction, that, taken all together, make it one of the most brilliant pieces of rhetoric in the English tongue.

It is not too much to say that this one lecture on Toussaint L'Ouverture probably did more than any other utterance to fashion public opinion, first to tolerate, and then to demand,

the arming of the blacks for the defense of the Union, and ultimately to assist the two races toward a better understanding of each other for the solution of their common problems.

Wendell Phillips: Toussaint L'Ouverture 1861-1863

If I stood here tonight to tell you the story of Napoleon, I should take it from the lips of Frenchmen, who find no language rich enough to paint the great captain of the nineteenth century. Were I to tell you the story of Washington, I should take it from your hearts,—you who think no marble white enough on which to carve the name of the Father of his Country. But I am to tell you the story of a negro who has left hardly one written line. I am to glean it from the reluctant testimony of Britons, Frenchmen, Spaniards,—men who despised him as a negro and a slave, and hated him because he had beaten them in battle. All the materials for his biography are from the lips of his enemies.

Let us pause a moment, and find something to measure him by. You remember, Macaulay says, comparing Cromwell with Napoleon, that Cromwell showed the greater military genius, if we consider that he never saw an army until he was forty; while Napoleon was educated from a boy in the best military schools in Europe. Cromwell manufactured his own army; Napoleon at the age of twenty-seven was placed at the head of the best troops Europe ever saw. They were both successful; but, says Macaulay, with such disadvantages, the Englishman showed the greater genius.

Whether you allow the inference or not, you will at least grant that it is a fair mode of measurement. Apply it to this negro. Cromwell never saw an army until he was forty; this man never saw a soldier until he was fifty. Cromwell manufactured his own army—out of what? Englishmen, the best

blood of Europe. Out of the middle class of Englishmen,—the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered what? Englishmen, their equals. This man manufactured his army out of what? Out of what you call the despicable race of negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to each other. Yet out of this mixed, and as you say, despicable mass, he forged a thunderbolt and hurled it at what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they skulked home to Jamaica. Now, if Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier.

Now, blue-eyed Saxon, proud of your race, go back with me to the commencement of the century, and select what statesman you please. Let him be either American or European; let him have a brain the result of six generations of culture; let him have the ripest training of university routine; let him add to it the better education of practical life; crown his temples with the silver locks of seventy years, and show me the man of Saxon lineage for whom his most sanguine admirer will wreath a laurel, rich as embittered foes have placed on the brow of this negro,—rare military skill, profound knowledge of human nature, content to blot out all party distinctions and trust a state to the blood of its sons,—anticipating Sir Robert Peel fifty years, and taking his station by the side of Roger Williams, before any Englishman or American had won the right; and yet this is the record which the history of rival states makes up for this inspired black of St. Domingo.

Some doubt the courage of the negro. Go to Hayti, and stand on those fifty thousand graves of the best soldiers France ever had, and ask them what they think of the negro's sword.

I would call him Napoleon, but Napoleon made his way to empire over broken oaths and through a sea of blood. This man never broke his word. I would call him Cromwell, but Cromwell was only a soldier, and the state he founded went down with him into his grave. I would call him Washington, but the great Virginian held slaves. This man risked his empire rather than permit the slave-trade in the humblest village of his dominions.

You may think me a fanatic, for you read history, not with your eyes, but with your prejudices. But fifty years hence, when Truth gets a hearing, the Muse of History will put Phocion for the Greek, Brutus for the Roman, Hampden for England, Fayette for France, choose Washington as the bright consummate flower of our earlier civilization, then dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write in clear blue, above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr, Toussaint L'Ouverture.

Historical Setting of Phillips's Eulogy of O'Connell

Carlos Martyn, the biographer of Phillips, has declared that the *Eulogy of O'Connell,* delivered by Phillips before applauding thousands of Irish-Americans in Music Hall, Boston, on August 6, 1875, on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of O'Connell's birth, was "among the half-dozen supreme efforts of the kind in the English language." It was, as Martyn says, "the apotheosis of one agitator by another."

That Phillips should have been called upon to make this address is not strange; for, from the time of his earliest appearance as an orator, there had been a close bond of sympathy between the great American orator of freedom and his great Irish prototype in the same cause. As early as 1837, when O'Connell read Phillips's speech on *The Murder of Lovejoy,*

the great Irishman pronounced it to be "the most classic short speech in the English language," and declared the young American orator to be "without an equal." This hearty feeling of admiration, Phillips reciprocated; and, throughout his life, he consciously made O'Connell his great model both as an agitator and as an orator.

From O'Connell's life, Phillips constantly drew inspiration because of the great Irish statesman's reliance upon the force of public opinion, his insistence upon peaceable measures of obtaining reform, and his devotion to freedom for all races under the sun.

Phillips accepted gratefully the assistance of O'Conneli in developing anti-slavery sentiment in America, and on all occasions reciprocated the favor in developing the sentiment for "home-rule" in Ireland. The greatest assistance that Phillips rendered the Irish cause, however, was when, in 1873, he undertook to overcome the pro-British and anti-Irish sentiment of America that had been produced by a series of lectures on this side of the Atlantic, delivered by the English historian, James Anthony Froude. This Englishman had supposed that he would have a clear field for his propaganda in America, but little did he reckon that the ablest American orator would instantly take the platform against him and follow him wherever he went, challenging his statements, exploding his falsehoods, and creating a mighty feeling of sympathy for the down-trodden condition of the Irish race. So complete was Phillips's triumph in this most unequal contest, that Froude retired from the field discomfited and crushed.

This incident in Phillips's career undoubtedly led the Irish-Americans of Boston to choose him for their orator at the centennial celebration of O'Connell's birth, and to give him thereby another opportunity for a great literary and oratorical triumph.

Here, Phillips stood, an Abolitionist talking to Democrats, a Protestant talking to Roman Catholics, a descendant of Englishmen talking to Irishmen, with the greatest hero of the Irish race as his theme; and, bating not one jot or one tittle of his true convictions, he secured from his audience rapturous applause as he compared the great Irish leader to Cromwell, who conquered Ireland, to Luther, who represented an antagonistic faith, and to Garrison, who had been scorned by the party with which these Irish-Americans had been affiliated.

As Austin has said in his biography of Phillips, this speech showed the orator's powers at their very best, and long since it has become recognized as an historic document that gives the most truthful analysis of O'Connell's character.

When Phillips described O'Connell, however, as possessing an eloquence "never equaled in modern times, and certainly not in English speech"—an eloquence superior to that of Randolph, Webster, Everett, Choate, Calhoun, or Prentiss—one wonders what the estimate of history must be upon this statement; for, obviously, the orator of the occasion could not mention himself in this category, while, by his very words and by all his past, he was, and had been, elevating himself to a pinnacle the equal of any that had ever been mounted in the history of oratory throughout the world.

Wendell Phillips: Eulogy of Daniel O'Connell

August 6, 1875

Broadly considered, O'Connell's eloquence has never been equaled in modern times, certainly not in English speech. Do you think I am partial? I will vouch John Randolph of Roanoke, the Virginia slave-holder, who hated an Irishman almost as much as he hated a Yankee, himself an orator of no mean level. Hearing O'Connell, he exclaimed, "This is the

man, these are the lips, the most eloquent that speak the English tongue in my day!" I think he was right. I remember the solemnity of Webster, the grace of Everett, the rhetoric of Choate; I know the eloquence that lay hid in the iron logic of Calhoun; I have melted beneath the magnetism of Seargent S. Prentiss of Mississippi, who wielded a power few men ever had; it has been my fortune to sit at the feet of the great speakers of the English tongue on the other side of the ocean; but I think all of them together never surpassed, and no one of them ever equaled O'Connell.

Nature intended him for our Demosthenes. Never, since the great Greek, has she sent forth one so lavishly gifted for his work as a tribune of the people. In the first place, he had a magnificent presence, impressive in bearing, massive, like that of Jupiter. Webster, himself, hardly outdid him in the majesty of his proportions. To be sure, he had not Webster's craggy face, and precipice of brow, nor his eyes glowing like anthracite coal. Nor had he the lion roar of Mirabeau. But his presence filled the eye. A small O'Connell would hardly have been an O'Connell at all. These physical advantages are half the battle.

I remember Russell Lowell telling us that Mr. Webster came home from Washington at the time the Whig party thought of dissolution, a year or two before his death, and went down to Faneuil Hall to protest; drawing himself up to his loftiest proportion, his brow clothed with thunder, before the listening thousands, he said, "Well, gentlemen, I am a Whig, a Massachusetts Whig, a Faneuil Hall Whig, a revolutionary Whig, a constitutional Whig. If you break up the Whig party, sir, where am I to go?" And says Lowell, "We all held our breath, thinking where he *could* go. If he had been five feet three, we should have said, 'Who cares where you go?'" So it was with O'Connell. There was something majestic in his

presence before he spoke; and he added to it what Webster had not, what Clay might have lent—infinite grace. You could only think of a greyhound as you looked at him; it would have been delightful to watch him, if he had not spoken a word. Then he had a voice that covered the gamut. The majesty of his indignation, fitly uttered in tones of superhuman power, made him able to "indict" a nation. Carlyle says, "He is God's own anointed king whose single word melts all wills into his." This describes O'Connell. Emerson says, "There is no true eloquence unless there is a man behind the speech." Daniel O'Connell was listened to because all England and all Ireland knew there was a man behind the speech.

I heard him once say, "I send my voice across the Atlantic, careering like the thunderstorm against the breeze, to remind the bondman that the dawn of his redemption is already breaking." You seem to hear the tones come echoing back to London from the Rocky Mountains. Then with the slightest possible Irish brogue, he would tell a story, while all Exeter Hall shook with laughter. The next moment, tears in his voice like a Scotch song, five thousand men wept. And all the while no effort. He seemed only breathing.

"As effortless as woodland nooks
Send violets up, and paint them blue."

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

THE ORATORY OF WENDELL PHILLIPS—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Phillips: *The Murder of Lovejoy* (1837)—See Phillips's *Speeches, Lectures, Letters* (1863) 1-10; Johnston's and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) II, 102-114; Bryan's *World Famous Orations* (1906) VIII, 222-230.
2. Phillips: *The Lost Arts* (1838)—See Phillips's *Speeches and Lectures* (Second Series) 365-383; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VI, 831-845; (1923) VIII, 276-290.
3. Phillips: *Public Opinion* (1852)—See *Speeches, Lectures, Letters* (First Series) 35-54.

4. Phillips: *Surrender of Simms* (1852)—See ibid. 55-70.
5. Phillips: *Philosophy of the Abolition Movement* (1853)—See ibid. 98-153; Johnston and Woodburn, II, 219-267.
6. Phillips: *Idols* (1859)—See *Speeches* (First Series) 242-262.
7. Phillips: *Harper's Ferry* (1859)—See ibid. 263-288; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) VIII, 318-331.
8. Phillips: *Burial of John Brown* (1859)—See *Speeches* (First Series) 289-293.
9. Phillips: *Lincoln's Election* (1860)—See ibid. 294-318.
10. Phillips: *Disunion* (1861)—See ibid. 343-370.
11. Phillips: *Under the Flag* (1861)—See ibid. 396-414.
12. Phillips: *Toussaint L'Ouverture* (1861-1863)—See ibid. 468-494; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VI, 846-867; (1923) VIII, 291-312.
13. Phillips: Daniel O'Connell (1875)—See *Speeches* (Second Series) 384-417; Martyn's *Wendell Phillips* 548-569; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921) 443-469.
14. Phillips: *The Scholar in a Republic* (1881)—See *Speeches* (Second Series) 330-364; Martyn's *Phillips* (1890) 570-594; Shurter's *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* (1906) 159-187; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921) 795-816.

Historical Backgrounds

See Channing's *History of U. S.;* McMaster's *History of the People of U. S.;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America;* Smith's *Political History of Slavery.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Brown, John—See biographies by Villard, Sanborn, Hinton, Redpath, and Von Holst.

Choate, Rufus—See biography by Brown.

Everett, Edward—See biography by Frothingham.

Garrison, William Lloyd—See biographies by his sons W. P. and F. J. Garrison, and by Goldwin Smith.

Phillips, Wendell—See biographies by Austin, Martyn, and Sears; also *Eulogy of Phillips* in Geo. Wm. Curtis's *Orations and Addresses* (1893) I, 261-285.

Seward, William H.—See biographies by Bancroft, Baker, Welles, Lothrop, and Hale.

Webster, Daniel—See biographies by Curtis, Lodge, McMaster, and Ogg.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Phillips's *Speech on the Murder of Lovejoy*

I. What is the history of Faneuil Hall?

II. What justification had Phillips or Adams for saying that the Stamp Act or the Tea Tax were unconstitutional?—What is the nature of the British constitution?

III. What part, if any, did the following men take in the Boston Tea Party: (1) Otis; (2) Hancock; (3) S. Adams; (4) Josiah Quincy, Jr.?

IV. What were the resolutions, the principles of which Austin would not dare to gainsay?

V. What is imprudence?

VI. Who were: (1) Hugh Peters; (2) John Cotton; (3) Hampden; (4) the race Hampden hated; (5) Warren?

VII. What position in regard to slavery agitation was being taken at the time of this speech by (1) John C. Calhoun; (2) John Quincy Adams; (3) Daniel Webster?

On Phillips's *Toussaint L'Ouverture*.

I. In what sense does Phillips use the word, *genius?*

II. Who were: (1) some of the biographers upon whom Phillips could have drawn for his story of Toussaint L'Ouverture—See Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.;* (2) Macaulay; (3) Sir Robert Peel; (4) Roger Williams; (5) Phocion—See Plutarch's *Lives;* (6) Brutus; (7) Hampden; (8) Fayette?

III. What were: (1) the military schools in which Napoleon received his education; (2) the great military victories of Cromwell; (3) the occasion for Toussaint fighting the Spanish; (4) the occasion for his fighting the French (5) the occasion for his fighting the English—See full text of lecture.

IV. What justification had Phillips for saying: (1) that Toussaint anticipated Peel; (2) that Phillips took his place beside Williams—See full text of lecture; (3) that Napoleon made his way to empire over broken oaths—John Lord's *Beacon Lights of History* IV, 415-416; (4) that Cromwell was only a soldier—See John Lord, IV, 114-116, 123-125; (5) that Toussaint was a martyr?—See full text of lecture.

V. What common characteristic seems to appear in all of Phillips's representative men?

VI. Why would not the following choice of representative persons appeal to a man of Phillips's temperament: (1) Pericles or Aristotle for Greece; (2) the Gracchi or Marcus Aurelius for Rome; (3) Algernon Sidney,

Sir Walter Raleigh, or Lord Nelson for England; (4) Joan of Arc, Louis XIV, Richlieu, or Voltaire for France; (5) Franklin for America?

On Phillips's *Eulogy of Daniel O'Connell*

I. What were some of the great oratorical triumphs of O'Connell?

II. What phraseology does Phillips adopt from: (1) Carlyle's description of Webster—See Lodge's *Webster* 194; (2) from Burke's *Speech on Conciliation?*

III. From which of Emerson's essays on Eloquence did Phillips take his quotation?

IV. What is the explanation: (1) for Randolph's attitude toward Irishmen—See Randolph's implied reference to William Cobbett, and Doctor Priestley in his speech *On the Militia Bill;* also his attitude toward Pitt (Adams's *Randolph* 47) and Pitt's course with respect to Ireland; (2) for Randolph's hatred of Yankees—See Adams's *Randolph,* 18-20.

V. What was Phillips's real attitude toward: (1) Webster; (2) Everett; (3) Choate?—See his lectures, *Public Opinion,* and *Idols.*

VI. How accurate is Phillips's picture of Mirabeau?—See Mathews's *French Revolution,* 152-154; Sears's *Hist. of Oratory,* 243-246.

VII. What opportunity was there: (1) for Randolph to hear O'Connell—See Adams's *Randolph,* 300; (2) for Phillips to hear Prentiss—See Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.;* (3) for Phillips to hear O'Connell?

Dictionary Studies from Wendell Phillips

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. archives 2. bulwarks 3. clerical 4. criterion 5. forsooth 6. gainsay 7. libel 8. prerogative 9. recreant 10. routed 11. sultan.

1. anticipating 2. biography 3. culture 4. despicable 5. glean 6. lineage 7. mode 8. reluctant 9. routine 10. sanguine.

1. careering 2. gamut 3. indict 4. redemption 5. tribune 6. vouch.

CHAPTER XIV

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Lincoln's Place Among the Ante-Bellum and Civil War Orators

Abraham Lincoln was the foremost campaign orator of the Republican party in the early years of its existence and the most inspired spokesman of the great mass of the American people during the period of the Civil War. At first, an orator, known only within the bounds of his own State, he suddenly rose to a position of oratorical eminence throughout the nation; and then gradually, through occasional formal utterances, he was accepted throughout the world as one of the most classic speakers of the English tongue.

The period in which Lincoln struggled upward to recognition in statesmanship and oratory was identical with that in which Stephen A. Douglas was regarded as the most powerful political orator of America, that is, from 1854 to 1860.

This was the period in which Douglas launched his theory of popular sovereignty as a means of terminating the agitation of slavery as a national issue, by conferring upon the people of new Territories the right to settle for themselves the question of whether or not they desired slavery.

In this period, the Missouri Compromise was repealed in order that the theory of popular sovereignty might be given a trial in Kansas and Nebraska; and, in this period, there occurred the civil war in Kansas between the free-soil and the pro-slave factions. Then came the *Dred Scott Decision,* which

practically nullified the popular sovereignty theory of Douglas and threatened the extension of slavery into all the old free States. And, in retaliation for this aggressive expansionist movement of the slave power, the Northern States, in many instances, passed *Personal Liberty Laws* to nullify the *Fugitive Slave Act;* and the extreme Abolitionists, with John Brown as their man of action, organized the raid on Harper's Ferry to start a slave uprising.

The Republican party, of which Lincoln was the chief spokesman in the West, while William H. Seward was its chief spokesman in the East, opposed this expansionist movement of slavery, which at first Douglas seemed to be promoting; but they would not countenance such movements as that of John Brown, which Wendell Phillips thoroughly approved, or the *Personal Liberty Laws,* which men like Charles Sumner of course upheld.

Lincoln, therefore, when he was winning national recognition as an orator during these first six years of his party's infancy, was a mild anti-slavery man in comparison with other anti-slavery agitators of the Abolitionist type; but he was accused, nevertheless, of having their extreme point of view, and of threatening the continued existence of slavery in the States of the old South.

Hence, when he came to prominence and was nominated and elected to the presidency in 1860, he was the storm center and target of all Southern oratory in the period of the secession movement.

Against him and his ideals, and against the Union of which he was President, was directed the eloquence of all the great oratorical giants of the South, among whom appeared such men as Wigfall of Texas, Benjamin of Louisiana, Davis of Mississippi, Yancey of Alabama, Toombs and Iverson of

Georgia, Rhett of South Carolina, and Breckinridge of Kentucky.

Almost alone among these Southern orators, Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia begged and pleaded with impressive eloquence that his State should not make Lincoln's election a pretext for secession; but even he, at last, gave way, and became an ardent supporter of the Confederacy built on the corner-stone of slavery.

When the great Civil War developed, therefore, Lincoln occupied a pivotal position; and by virtue of his office as President, he became the accepted spokesman of the nation, in which capacity, from time to time, he delivered memorable addresses, that have become classic utterances in the world's oratorical literature.

But even then he was not permitted to stand alone as the sole orator of the Northern cause. With him and sometimes against him, were the powerful oratorical spokesmen of the Senate, Charles Sumner, Benjamin F. Wade, and Henry Winter Davis. With him and in advance of him, was the great Abolitionist agitator, Wendell Phillips. But powerfully behind him stood the stalwart pulpit orator, Henry Ward Beecher. And beside him at Gettysburg stood the great orator of a preceding generation, the old-time Whig statesman and advocate of Union—Edward Everett.

Whether in power, or out of power, therefore, Lincoln moved in the company of great orators, arrayed either for him or against him. The years that had witnessed his rise to fame were years of storm and stress, and so likewise were the years in which he was the recognized official spokesman of the nation. They were years that produced great eloquence and great orators in abundance; but they were also years in which no more eloquent political leader, no more able protagonist of

freedom, no more statesmanlike defender of the Union, and no more ardent advocate of justice blended with mercy, was to be found than Abraham Lincoln, the martyr President.

The Life of Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln occupies a unique position in American history. Venerated above all other statesmen, with not even Washington as an exception, this martyred President is regarded as the great savior of the nation—a grand, heroic, and solitary figure, to be remembered always for his patient, just, and far-reaching statesmanship, that guided the ship of state through the storm and stress of four bloody years of fratricidal strife.

Lincoln was not merely great as a statesman, however, but great as an orator as well; for, if all the acts of his statesmanship could be obliterated, he would still be remembered both here and abroad, as one of the world's most renowned masters of the art of simple and sublime eloquence, as an untutored genius that could give to the world, in his oratory, some of its never-fading gems of permanent literature, which stand beside the classic productions of its greatest orators in all ages.

This great man, who has won such distinction both as a statesman and as an orator, was born in a rude log cabin, of lowly parentage, in a frontier community, near the present town of Hodgenville, Kentucky, in the year 1809; and, in every way, he deserves to be called—like Patrick Henry, the great orator of the Revolution—a "child of the forest."

For the first eight years of his childhood, he was brought up next to nature, studying the wild life about him, listening to the stories of trappers, hunters, and Indian fighters, and absorbing from his mother much of the mysticism that she derived from circuit-riding preachers, who, at frequent inter-

vals, in religious revivals, stirred the frontier communities to the highest pitch of religious fervor.

Just at the time, however, when the boy, Lincoln, had grown sufficiently to assist his father by riding to the gristmill with corn that was to be ground for the family use, his father—who was always shiftless—found it necessary to make a new start in life in an entirely new country.

At the age of eight, then, Lincoln removed with his parents to the wilderness of southern Indiana, and lived in another rude shelter, hardly worthy the name of cabin, on the banks of Pigeon Creek, about fifteen miles north of the Ohio river in Spencer County.

In this new home, after one hard winter of exposure, Lincoln lost his mother, to whom, he said, he owed all that he was and all that he ever hoped to be. But shortly, thereafter, he came under the influence of a step-mother, who forced his father to make the home at least habitable, and who brought with her into the wilderness such books for the boy to read, as the *Bible, Aesop's Fables, Robinson Crusoe,* and *Pilgrim's Progress.*

Then, it was, that Lincoln gained his reputation as a rail-splitter and as a droll story-teller among the neighboring farm-hands; while he began also to obtain the rudiments of self-education, as he sprawled out on the cabin floor at night before the crackling log-fire to do sums in arithmetic on the back of a wooden shovel, which he shaved off repeatedly in order to get a new writing surface.

Then, it was, also, that Lincoln grew up to manhood. At this time, he became the champion boxer and wrestler of the neighborhood; and, during this period he got his first glimpse of the great world beyond Pigeon Creek, in a trip on a flatboat, down the Ohio and the Mississippi, to New Orleans.

When he was twenty-one years old, in the year 1830, both he and his father felt the impulse again to move further westward; and, accordingly, they set out once more to make the regularly recurring fresh start in life.

This time, their family migration took them to the Sangamon river in Illinois; and, there, Lincoln, after assisting in establishing his father, struck out for himself. His first venture was another famous trip to New Orleans on a flatboat, when unauthenticated tradition says that he first witnessed the shocking spectacle of slaves being sold under the hammer of the auctioneer, and when he is reported to have said, "If I ever get a chance to hit that institution, I'll hit it hard."

Upon his return from this trip, he settled down in the now defunct river-town of New Salem, where, as clerk in the village grocery store, he soon acquired notoriety by his story-telling, and political leadership in the community by his prowess as a fighter when he thrashed the chief bully of a neighboring band of ruffians, who, thereafter, became his staunch supporters.

With the support of this gang, which was known as the "Clary Grove Boys," he ran for the legislature in 1832 and secured all the votes but three in his community. Such support, however, was insufficient to elect him; and, in the meantime, he led a company of men into the Black Hawk War, which came to an end before he had a chance to smell powder.

Then he returned to New Salem and established himself as a storekeeper by buying up a place, that his friends, the "Clary Grove Boys," had previously sacked and put out of business.

This experience in store-keeping was as unfortunate financially as had been any of his former ventures; but, during the few months in which he was so occupied, he happened to come across a complete edition of *Blackstone's Commentaries* in the

bottom of a barrel of household goods, that he bought from a stranded wayfarer. These books he began to read; and, finding them intensely interesting, he determined to become a lawyer.

Before this ambition could be satisfied, however, he failed in business; and, to recoup his fortunes, he staked all his worldly resources upon an election to the State legislature in 1834. This time, his efforts to win political recognition were successful; and, for three successive terms, between 1834 and 1840, he represented his district at the State capital, where he led the movement to change the seat of government from Vandalia to Springfield.

In 1837, Lincoln himself removed from New Salem to Springfield; and, there, after being admitted to the bar, he began to practice law in competition with a most distinguished company of eminent rivals, among whom appeared conspicuously Lincoln's friend, Edward D. Baker, and Lincoln's political opponent, Stephen A. Douglas.

For ten years, he devoted himself to his profession, and then ambition led him to seek an election to the lower House of Congress. In 1846, he was nominated for this position by the Whig party, against Peter Cartwright, an evangelist, who was the Democratic nominee.

The issue of the campaign between Lincoln and Cartwright at this time, when the country-at-large was absorbed in problems arising from the War with Mexico, was strongly personal and utterly devoid of national significance. Lincoln, as a Whig, was faced with the ridiculous charge of being an aristocrat, and then, as a non-church-member, with the charge of being an infidel. The first charge, he, of course, demolished eagerly as a humorous absurdity; but the second charge, he disdained to answer, except in the following way:—Cartwright,

one evening, was conducting a revival, and Lincoln was present. The evangelist asked all those who wanted to go to Heaven to stand. Then he asked all those who wanted to go to Hell to stand. Lincoln alone remained seated; whereupon Mr. Cartwright asked him where he was going? And Lincoln replied simply: "I'm going to Congress."

And so it turned out. Lincoln went to Congress for one term between 1847 and 1849. There, he made a wonderful reputation as a story-teller. There, he voted regularly with the Whig party in opposition to the war measures of the Polk administration. There, he delivered two characteristic speeches: the one, a lawyer's plea, on his so-called *Spot Resolutions,* attacking the administration on its pretexts for the war; and the other, a campaign speech, on *Military Heroes,* in support of General Zachary Taylor, the Whig nominee for President, and in ridicule of General Lewis Cass, the Democratic nominee. But, like Thomas Corwin, Lincoln soon came to realize that, in national politics, his buffoonery got him nowhere, and that his opposition to a war administration was bound to make him unpopular and to leave him a political derelict.

When his single term of office in Congress was completed, his political future seemed sealed. He had no chance of reelection. In 1850, he was offered the governorship of the Oregon Territory; but this he declined; and he settled down once more to build up his practice as a lawyer.

Until 1854, Lincoln remained in political obscurity, but in that year he was again raised to prominence by his opposition to Douglas's policy of popular sovereignty as embodied in the act of organizing the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska.

When Douglas returned to Illinois to defend himself after the passage of this measure, he found that his opponents had

selected Lincoln to answer him on the stump. Douglas first tried to speak in Chicago, but his constituents would not listen to him. He did succeed, however, in getting a hearing at Springfield on October 3, 1854; and, in reply to this speech, Lincoln spoke most eloquently in the same place on the following day, and then still more eloquently under similar circumstances twelve days later in Peoria.

These two speeches made Lincoln famous over night. In that very year, he became, as a result of these speeches, the Whig candidate for the United States Senate; but, not being able to muster more than fifteen votes in the legislature out of a total of ninety-seven in a three-cornered fight, he threw his votes to Lyman Trumbull, an anti-slavery Democrat, and against Governor Matteson, the Douglas Democrat, thereby securing the election of Trumbull.

Thereafter, Lincoln was one of the powerful leaders of public opinion in Illinois. The new Republican party tried to appropriate him at once; but he did not make up his mind to join this party until he had pondered the move for another year and a half. Then he came out boldly as a Republican; and, at the State Convention of that party in 1856, he delivered one of his most memorable speeches to strike the keynote of the campaign—a speech once thought lost, but now recovered and printed in his complete works—a speech so powerful and fascinating that the official reporters could not report it.

Though Lincoln received a number of votes in the National Republican Convention of 1856 for the Vice-Presidential nomination, his real introduction to the nation as a whole came in the summer and autumn of 1858, when he was the candidate of the Republicans in Illinois, against Stephen A. Douglas,

for the seat that Douglas had occupied in the United States Senate.

The senatorial campaign of that year started out with Lincoln's famous *"House Divided Against Itself" Speech,* delivered before the Republican State Convention on June 17, 1858, when Lincoln accepted his nomination; and it continued in a series of joint debates, interspersed with numerous other stump speeches, that took the two candidates into every community of importance in Illinois.

In these debates, Lincoln secured the approval of a majority of the voters in Illinois, but lost the senatorship by the votes of a number of hold-over Douglas Democrats in the State legislature.

As Lincoln himself said, however, this contest was nothing in comparison to the presidential election in 1860. By admissions that he forced Douglas to make, he was sure that Douglas would lose the support of the South for President two years later; and, by matching his eloquence against that of the "Little Giant," he made himself so famous, that he became a likely candidate of the Republicans for that office.

What Lincoln lacked as a candidate for the Republican nomination was a political backing in the East, and this he secured by a famous speech, called *The Cooper Institute Address,* delivered on February 27, 1860, in New York City, on an invitation from a committee of which Henry Ward Beecher was a leading member.

In the audience that heard Lincoln on this occasion was a young man destined to rise to future eminence as a lawyer, orator, and diplomat. That man was Joseph H. Choate; and he has left us a description of the effect of Lincoln's eloquence. "That night," says Choate in his address on *Lincoln,* "the great hall, and the next day, the whole city rang with delighted

applause and congratulations, and he, who had come as a stranger, departed with the laurels of a great triumph."

Against William H. Seward, a powerful orator and leading statesman of the party, who had been, for more than ten years, a United States Senator from New York, Lincoln did secure the Republican nomination; and, in a four-cornered fight against Douglas, Breckinridge, and Bell, he was elected to the presidency.

Almost immediately, the secession movement began; and, when Lincoln took office, he held undisputed authority over only one-half the nation. Then four purgatorial years of civil strife began with Lincoln at the helm; and, during this strife, Lincoln was able to strike that hard blow at slavery, which tradition says he promised to deliver, when, on January 1, 1863, he emancipated the slaves in all the States then in rebellion.

In 1864, Lincoln was overwhelmingly re-elected President. The war was nearly over; but his troubles concerning reconstruction only thickened about him; and as he was preparing to face dissension within his own party, to force the radical leaders of Congress to take a more lenient view toward re-admitting the Southern States into the Union, he was shot down by a cowardly assassin on April 14, 1865.

Because Lincoln was "the most American of all Americans," he has won a permanent place in the affection of his countrymen; and because he set before the world an example of the highest statesmanship, he has won an equally permanent place among the great leaders of all times and all peoples.

Many factors in his personality contributed to his elevation above the many men who were his rivals for position and fame, but not the least among these was his strange power of elo-

quence, hardly to be expected in such a man, yet possessed in a degree that has seldom been surpassed.

None would suspect, that, in this untutored man, a child of the wilderness and the frontier—tall, lank, ungainly, with homely features, and a shrill strident voice—there should reside a power that would hold vast audiences enthralled. Yet, in spite of every disadvantage of birth, training, and appearance, nature had created in this man, as it had in Patrick Henry before him, another "forest-born Demosthenes."

At first, like many another orator—like Webster for example—Lincoln had a tendency toward bombast in his utterances; but, gradually as his experience deepened, he began to develop a style peculiarly his own, simple, and direct, bristling with wit, compact with logic, crowded with homely illustrations and pointed anecdotes, that led captive rich and poor, learned and unlearned, in a way that challenges comparison with the preaching of Christ in the parables or in the *Sermon on the Mount.*

There are three distinct stages in the development of Lincoln's oratory. The first stage carries him through his experience in Congress down to 1849, when he was content to be a political hack in the service of the Whig party, as in the case of his speech on *The Spot Resolutions* on January 12, 1848; or when he was content to emulate the buffoonery of "Tom" Corwin's *Reply to General Crary* in his own ludicrous speech on *Military Heroes,* delivered July 27, 1848.

The second stage was when he stood forth as the great phrase-maker of the Republican party, at least in the West, between 1854 and 1860, when he displayed his keen, shrewd, analytical, penetrating powers of intellect, cornering, trapping, and overthrowing his chief political opponent in the arena of public debate, when he gave to the world his *Peoria Speech* in

reply to Douglas in 1854; his *Address to the Republican State Convention* in 1856; his *"House Divided Against Itself" Speech* and his numerous speeches in the *Lincoln-Douglas Debates* in 1858; and his *Cooper Institute Address* in 1860.

And the third stage was when, after his election and during his presidency, he was sobered by the thought of his tremendous responsibility in the face of rebellion, when he sought to re-unite a divided people, to do justice, to be firm and yet to be merciful; when he gave to the world, under these circumstances, and with these motives, those great legacies of beautiful literary expression which are found in his *Farewell to His Neighbors at Springfield* in 1861; in his *First Inaugural Address* of the same year; in his immortal *Gettysburg Address,* delivered in 1863; and in his *Second Inaugural Address,* delivered in 1865 just before his death.

Compared with other great orators and other great statesmen, Lincoln was not long in the public eye; but, during the brief period when he was active, great questions were threshed out, great decisions were reached, and great revolutions in society were brought about. By his great gift of eloquence, he raised himself to the highest station of responsibility, and while he occupied that position, he gave to the world whenever the occasion demanded further exhibitions of inspired eloquence that have never been surpassed.

To have been a loved and venerated martyr, to have been the savior and hope of his nation, and to have been the author of emancipation for millions of another race, is praise sufficient; but, for completeness in the record, to this all-sufficient praise, must be added the statement that Abraham Lincoln will stand forever as "the equal of any man who ever wrote his mother tongue"—a prose-poet whose greatest utterances read like "a chapter of Holy Writ" which never can grow old

or stale—an orator whose name must be written with the names of the most renowned in all ages of the world's eloquence.

Historical Setting of Lincoln's "House Divided Against Itself" Speech and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates

Among all the debates of American history, none is more renowned, and none has had more immediate and far-reaching consequences than the debates between Lincoln and Douglas in the summer of 1858, when these two great rivals met on the hustings in Illinois as opposing candidates for election to the United States Senate.

To understand the issue involved in these debates, it is necessary to understand some of the more important events of American history that immediately preceded them. It is necessary, for example, to know, that, four years before, Douglas had launched his theory of popular sovereignty in the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill,* which repealed the Missouri Compromise, and, that, as a result of this legislation, civil war began in Kansas, and the Republican party was organized to prevent the spread of slavery into the Territories. The Republicans at first believed that Douglas secured the enactment of this legislation to help make Kansas a slave State, and they were further convinced of this, when Douglas, in league with other Democrats, yielded without question to the Supreme Court decision of 1857 in the *Dred Scott Case,* which contradicted his theory of popular sovereignty and opened the way to extend slavery, not only into all Territories, but also into all free States as well. By clever reasoning, Douglas managed to maintain his adherence both to the Supreme Court and to the doctrine of popular sovereignty, but it is evident that his real sympathy always lay with the latter.

Though anti-slavery men had cordially hated Douglas, when

he first broached his theory of popular sovereignty in the Kansas-Nebraska legislation, they gradually came to think better of him, when they saw that this doctrine was playing into their hands; and, just before the senatorial campaign of 1858, many of them considered him as the best instrument to effect their purposes; because, when President Buchanan, in the spring of that year, had tried to force a slave constitution on Kansas with the fraudulent appearance of following the principle of popular sovereignty, Douglas bravely opposed the intrigue of the President, and, splitting with the administration, insisted upon giving his doctrine a fair trial.

No action could have been more heroic than this of Douglas. Yet the Republicans of Illinois were unwilling to entrust their cause to such a recent convert. They could not forget that he had said, he didn't care whether slavery was voted up or voted down in Kansas, and they could not forget that he had given full acquiescence to the Dred Scott decision.

They, therefore, determined to put into the field against Douglas in the campaign for the senatorship their own candidate; and, without a dissenting vote in the convention at Springfield, on June 17, 1858, they made Abraham Lincoln that candidate.

For some time, Lincoln had anticipated the nomination for this office; and, more carefully than was his wont, he prepared his speech of acceptance with the purpose of making unmistakably plain and vivid the issues that divided him from Douglas. A sentence and a phrase at a time, this speech was prepared on scraps of paper, that Lincoln put, one after another, into the capacious lining of his tall silk hat; and then, when the speech had been polished into final form, and thoroughly committed to memory, he tried it out before a few friends and leaders of the party, the night before the nomination. They shook their heads dubiously when he delivered the famous

paragraph containing the Biblical quotation that "a house divided against itself cannot stand"; but, to their objection, Lincoln replied that he would rather lose the senatorship with that phrase in the speech than win it without it.

The next day, at eight o'clock in the evening, in the State House, where the convention met, Lincoln delivered his address without manuscript and without notes, as he had prepared it. The effect upon the immediate audience was like a battle-call; and the next day Lincoln's words were carried to the ends of the nation, establishing clearly for all time the issues between the two great parties. As Chittenden says, in his compilation of Lincoln's speeches, "whether judged by its intrinsic qualities, or by its influence upon the fortunes of the Republic, this speech is one of the greatest of all political documents since the Declaration of Independence."

When Douglas received word in Washington of Lincoln's nomination, he said: "Now I shall have my hands full. Lincoln is the strong man of his party—full of wit, facts, dates, and . . . . the best stump speaker in the West; he is as honest as he is shrewd." To meet this antagonist, therefore, Douglas, flushed with recent triumphs at the capital, hurried back to his constituents, as soon as Congress was adjourned, and at once began a speaking campaign that was to carry both him and his opponent throughout the State.

Douglas's first speech was delivered on the evening of July 9, from the balcony of the Tremont House, in Chicago, to a large crowd assembled in the street below. To this speech, Lincoln replied on the following evening in the same place. Douglas then moved down the State to Bloomington, and addressed an audience there on July 16, only to be followed by Lincoln in the same manner; and, as Douglas proceeded from there to Springfield, he found Lincoln still trailing him to answer immediately whatever he said in the campaign.

It was Lincoln's strategy to attract to himself part of the glamor that belonged to Douglas as a nationally famous statesman, and hence he boldly challenged Douglas to meet him thereafter in a series of joint debates to take place in the various congressional districts of the State.

With everything to lose and nothing to gain by such an arrangement, Douglas most magnanimously accepted the challenge, agreeing to seven debates: in Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy, and Alton respectively; but not so magnanimously he took for himself four openings and closings, to Lincoln's three.

The setting for these debates, says Morse in his *Life of Lincoln,* had "the picturesqueness of the times and the region. The people gathered in vast multitudes, to the number of ten thousand, even of twenty thousand, at the places named for the speech-making; they came in their wagons from all the country round, bringing provisions, and making camps in the groves and fields. There were bonfires and music, parading and drinking. And he was a singular man in Illinois who was not present at some one of these encounters."

As the two candidates stepped forth upon the platform, there was of course a marked contrast in their appearance. There was Douglas, almost a dwarf, and Lincoln, a giant. Douglas was short, stalky, graceful, and polished; and Lincoln was tall, rangy, awkward, and uncouth. When Douglas began to speak, everyone was attracted by his deep, powerful, and musical voice; but, when Lincoln began, everyone noticed only his high-pitched, strident tones.

It would seem as if all the odds were in favor of Douglas; but, in one important respect, he was at a marked disadvantage. He was attempting to reconcile two irreconcilable points of view on the slavery question; and hence, his logic was clever but faulty, and his conclusions only superficial; while Lincoln

had but one great principle to make clear and enforce, with the aid of his matchless epigrammatic style and his never-failing, hard-hitting, keen-cutting logic, such as has seldom been equaled in any of America's greatest statesmen.

The debates began at Ottawa good-naturedly but with considerable condescension on the part of Douglas. They soon developed, however, into a contest of wits in which each speaker sought to entrap the other in a dilemma which would cost him the support of Northern, or Southern, sympathizers. Each sought by a series of questions to force the other into such a dilemma; but, clever to the extreme, as each debater appeared, history has awarded the palm in this contest to Lincoln for one question that he propounded to Douglas at Freeport. The question was this: "Can the people of a Territory, in any lawful way, exclude slavery from its limits, prior to the formation of a State constitution?" If Douglas answered *yes* to this question, he would probably win the present contest, but lose the South in the presidential election of 1860, because he would show that he denied the doctrine set forth in the Dred Scott decision, which gave the South then its only hope for the extension of slavery; and if he answered *no,* he would lose forever all his following in the North, both then and thereafter, because he would thereby retract all his fair-sounding claims for popular sovereignty. Lincoln's friends begged him to retract this question, saying that Douglas would answer *yes,* and that answer would lose the senatorship for Lincoln, but Lincoln replied, "I am after larger game; if Douglas answers as you say he will, he can never be President, and the battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this."

Sure enough, Douglas did answer *yes,* and the debates continued with increased heat and ardor to the end, Lincoln keeping tantalizingly cool and persistent, while Douglas grew more and more irritable and petulant in his tactics.

All seven of the joint debates in this series were interspersed among nearly a hundred other speaking engagements for both the contestants; and when at last the canvass was finished, each speaker waited anxiously the result of the polls. This result showed a popular vote for the Republicans of 125,000, and for the Douglas-Democrats a vote of 121,000. On the face of the returns, it would seem that Lincoln had won, but the apportionment of representation in the State legislature was such, according to the census of 1850, that the Democrats retained there a majority of eight; and, hence, Douglas received the senatorship and was the immediate victor.

This was a bitter disappointment to Lincoln; but, in no sense, was the result of the debates to him an utter loss; for his vision of 1860 was correct. Douglas's answer to the Freeport question split the Democratic party into a Northern and a Southern wing and lost for Douglas the great goal of his ambitions. These same debates, that ruined Douglas, however, introduced Lincoln to the nation, and were the first sure stepping-stones in his phenomenal rise to the great office of the presidency, to which he, as well as Douglas, had aspired.

Introductory Speeches to the Lincoln-Douglas Debates

I. Abraham Lincoln: The "House Divided Against Itself" Speech

June 17, 1858

Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the Convention: If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object, and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that

agitation not only has not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South. Have we no tendency to the latter condition? Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination-piece of machinery, so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision.

Put this and that together, and we have another nice little niche, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision, declaring that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a *State* to exclude slavery from its limits. And this may especially be expected if the doctrine of "care not whether slavery be voted down or voted up," shall gain upon the public mind sufficiently to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made.

Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of being alike lawful in all the States. Welcome or unwelcome, such decision is probably coming, and will soon be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown. We shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their State free, and we shall awake to the reality, instead, that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave State. To meet and overthrow that

dynasty is the work before all those who would prevent that consummation. That is what we have to do. How can we best do it?

There are those who denounce us openly to their own friends, and yet whisper to us softly that Senator Douglas is the aptest instrument there is with which to effect that object. They wish us to *infer* all, from the fact that he now has a little quarrel with the present head of the dynasty; and that he has regularly voted with us on a single point, upon which he and we have never differed. They remind us that he is a great man and that the largest of us are very small ones. Let this be granted. "But a living dog is better than a dead lion."

Judge Douglas, if not a dead lion for this work, is at least a caged and toothless one.

How can he oppose the advance of slavery? He does not care anything about it. His avowed mission is impressing the "public heart" to care nothing about it. A leading Douglas Democratic newspaper thinks Douglas's superior talent will be needed to resist the revival of the African slave-trade. Does Douglas believe that an effort to revive that trade is approaching? He has not said so. Does he really think so? But if it is, how can he resist it? For years he has labored to prove it a sacred right of white men to take negro slaves into the new Territories. Can he possibly show that it is less a sacred right to buy them where they can be bought cheapest? And unquestionably they can be bought cheaper in Africa than in Virginia.

He has done all in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to one of a mere right of property; and as such, how can he oppose the foreign slave-trade? How can he refuse that trade in that "property" shall be "perfectly free," unless he does it as protection to the home production? And

as the home producers will probably not ask the protection, he will be wholly without a ground of opposition.

Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be wiser today than he was yesterday—that he may rightfully change when he finds himself wrong. But can we, for that reason run ahead, and infer that he will make any particular change, of which he himself has given no intimation? Can we safely base our action upon any such vague inference? Now, as ever, I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught that can be personally offensive to him. Whenever, if ever, he and we can come together on principle, so that our cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But, clearly, he is not now with us—he does not pretend to be, he does not promise ever to be.

Our cause, then, must be entrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends—those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work—who *do care* for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger. With every external circumstance against us, of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then, to falter now?—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent! The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we *shall not fail*. Wise counsels may accelerate, or mistakes delay it; but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.

II. Stephen A. Douglas: Reply to Lincoln at Chicago

JULY 9, 1858

Mr. Lincoln has made a speech before the Republican State Convention in which he states the basis upon which he proposes to carry on the campaign during this summer. He says that "*a house divided against itself cannot stand,*—that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free,—and that it will become all one thing or all the other."

In other words, Mr. Lincoln asserts as a fundamental principle of this government that there must be uniformity in the local laws and domestic institutions of each and all the States of the Union; and he, therefore, invites all the non-slaveholding States to band together, organize as one body, and make war upon slavery in Kentucky, upon slavery in Virginia, upon the Carolinas, upon slavery in all of the slaveholding States in this Union, and to persevere in the war until slavery shall be exterminated. He then notifies the slaveholding States to stand together as a unit and make an aggressive war upon the free States of this Union with a view of establishing slavery in them all; of forcing it upon Illinois, of forcing it upon New York, upon New England, and upon every other free State, and that they shall keep up the warfare until slavery has been formally established in them all. In other words, Mr. Lincoln advocates boldly and clearly a war of sections, a war of the North against the South, of the free States against the slave States—a war of extermination—to be continued relentlessly until the one or the other shall be subdued, and all the States shall either become free or become slave.

Now, my friends, I must say to you frankly, that I take bold, unqualified issue with him upon that principle. I assert

that it is neither desirable nor possible that there should be uniformity in the local institutions and domestic regulations of the different States of this Union. The framers of our government never contemplated uniformity in its internal concerns. The Fathers of the Revolution, and the sages who made the Constitution; well understood that the laws and domestic institutions which would suit the granite hills of New Hampshire would be totally unfit for the rice plantations of South Carolina.

Uniformity in local and domestic affairs would be destructive of State rights, of State sovereignty, of personal liberty and personal freedom. Uniformity is the parent of despotism the world over, not only in politics, but in religion. Wherever the doctrine of uniformity is proclaimed, that all the States must be free, or all slave; that all labor must be white, or all black; that all the citizens of the different States must have the same privileges, or be governed by the same regulations; you have destroyed the greatest safeguard which our institutions have thrown around the rights of the citizen.

I do not acknowledge that the States must all be free, or must all be slave. I do not acknowledge that the negro must have civil and political rights everywhere or nowhere.

Mr. Lincoln goes for uniformity in our domestic institutions, for a war of sections, until one, or the other, shall be subdued. I go for the great principle of the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill,* the right of the people to decide for themselves.

I yield obedience to the decisions of the Supreme Court. Mr. Lincoln objects to a decision of that court because it does not put the negro in the possession of the rights of citizenship on an equality with the white man. I am opposed to negro equality. I repeat that this nation is a white people—a people composed of European descendants—a people that have estab-

lished this government for themselves and their posterity, and I am in favor of preserving not only the purity of the blood, but the purity of the government from any mixture or amalgamation with inferior races.

III. Abraham Lincoln: Reply to Douglas at Chicago

JULY 10, 1858

Judge Douglas says that I am in favor of making all the States of this Union uniform in all their internal regulations; that in all their domestic concerns I am in favor of making them entirely uniform. He says I am in favor of making war by the North upon the South, for the extinction of slavery; that I am also in favor of inviting the South to war upon the North for the purpose of nationalizing slavery.

Now, if you will carefully read the passage he refers to in my previous speech, you will find that I did not say that I was in favor of inviting the South to war upon the North for the purpose of nationalizing slavery.

Now, if you will carefully read the passage he refers to in my previous speech, you will find that I did not say that I was in favor of anything in it. I only said what I expected would take place. I made a prediction only, I did not even say that I desired that slavery should be put in course of ultimate extinction. I do say so now, however, so there need be no longer any difficulty about that. I know what I meant, and I will not leave this crowd in doubt, if I can explain it to them.

I am not unaware that this government has endured eighty-two years half slave and half free. I know that. I am tolerably well acquainted with the history of the country, and I know that it has endured eighty-two years, half slave and half free. I *believe*—and that is what I meant to allude to there—I *be-*

lieve it *has* endured, because, during all that time, until the introduction of the *Nebraska Bill* by Judge Douglas, the public mind *did* rest, all the time, in the belief that slavery was in course of ultimate extinction. That was what gave us the rest that we have had through that period of eighty-two years; at least, so I believe.

The great mass of the nation have rested in the belief that slavery *was* in course of ultimate extinction. And they had reason so to believe. The adoption of the Constitution and its attendant history *led* the people to believe so; and— that such was the belief of the framers of the Constitution itself— why did these old men, about the time of the adoption of the Constitution, decree that slavery should not go into the new Territory, where it had not already gone? Why declare that, within twenty years, the African slave-trade might be cut off by Congress? Why were all these acts? What were they but a clear indication that the framers of the Constitution intended and expected the ultimate extinction of that institution? And, now, when I say that I think the opponents of slavery will resist the farther spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest with the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction, I only mean to say, that they will place it where the founders of this government originally placed it.

In the course of Judge Douglas's speech last night, he reminded us that this government was made for white men— that he believed it was for white men. Well, that is putting it into a shape in which no one wants to deny it; but the Judge then goes into his passion for drawing inferences that are not warranted. I protest, now and forever, against that counterfeit logic, which presumes that because I did not want a negro woman for a slave, I do necessarily want her for a wife. My

understanding is that I need not have her for either, but, as God made us separate, we can leave one another alone, and do much good thereby. There are white men enough to marry all the white women, and enough black men to marry all the black women; and, in God's name, let them be so married. The Judge regales us with the terrible enormities that take place by the mixture of the races; that the inferior bears the superior down. Why, Judge, if we do not let them get together in the Territories, they won't mix there.

We have the Judge giving his exposition of what the Declaration of Independence means, and we have him saying that the people of America are equal to the people of England. According to his construction, you, who are Germans, are not connected with it. Now, I ask you, in all soberness, if all these things, if indulged in, if ratified, if confirmed and endorsed, if taught to our children, and repeated to them, do not tend to rub out the sentiment of liberty in the country, and to transform this government into a government of some other form.

Those arguments that are made, that the inferior race are to be treated with as much allowance as they are capable of enjoying; that as much is to be done for them as their condition will allow—what are these arguments? They are the arguments that kings have made for enslaving people in all ages of the world. You will find that all the arguments in favor of king-craft were of this class; they always bestrode the necks of the people, not that they wanted to do it, but because the people were better off for being ridden. That is their argument, and this argument of the Judge is the same old serpent that says, you work and I eat, you toil and I will enjoy the fruits of it. Turn it whatever way you will—whether it come from the mouth of a king, as an excuse for

enslaving the people of his country, or from the mouth of men of another race,—it is all the same old serpent; and I hold, that, if that course of argumentation that is made for the purpose of convincing the public mind that we should not care about this, should be granted, it does not stop with the negro.

I should like to know, if, taking this old Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are created equal upon principle, and making exceptions to it, where will it stop? If one man says, it does not mean *negro,* why not another say, it does not mean some other man? If that declaration is not the truth, let us get the statute book in which we find it, and tear it out! Who is so bold as to do it! If it is not true, let us tear it out! You cry "No! No!" Then let us stick to it. Then let us stand firmly by it.

My friend has said to me that I am a poor man to quote Scripture. I will try again, however. It is said in one of the admonitions of our Lord, "As your Father in Heaven is perfect, be ye also perfect." The Savior, I suppose, did not expect that any human creature could be perfect as the Father in Heaven; but He said, "As your Father in Heaven is perfect, be ye also perfect." He set that up as a standard, and he who does most toward reaching that standard, attains the highest degree of moral perfection. So I say in relation to the principle that all men are created equal, let it be as nearly reached as we can. If we cannot give freedom to every creature, let us do nothing to impose slavery upon any other creature. Let us then turn this government back into the channel in which the framers of the Constitution originally placed it.

My friends, I have detained you about as long as I desired to do, and I have only this to say: let us discard all this

quibbling about this man and the other man—this race and that race and the other race being inferior, and therefore they must be placed in an inferior position—discarding our standard that we have left to us. Let us discard all these things and unite as one people throughout this land, until we shall once more stand up declaring all men are created equal.

My friends, I could not, without launching off upon some new topic, which would detain you too long, continue to-night. I thank you for this most extensive audience that you have furnished me to-night. I leave you, hoping that the lamp of liberty will burn in your bosoms until there shall no longer be a doubt that all men are created free and equal.

Historical Setting of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

George William Curtis has spoken of Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* as one of the three greatest triumphs of American oratory; and, in this group of three pre-eminently great orations, he places beside the *Gettysburg Address,* Patrick Henry's "electrical warning to George Third" at the time of the *Stamp Act* in 1765, and Wendell Phillips's speech *On the Murder of Lovejoy* in 1837. It will be noted that, in this grouping, he passes over Fisher Ames's great speech *On the Jay Treaty* in 1796, and Daniel Webster's world-renowned *Reply to Hayne* in 1830; but these omissions could not have been made inadvertently; and, hence, we have a statement on the highest authority that Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* was one of the most sublime achievements in the history of the world's oratory.

This perfect gem of English prose, the *Gettysburg Address,* was given to posterity on the afternoon of November 19, 1863, in the presence of one hundred thousand eager listeners, at the dedication ceremonies for the National Cemetery at

Gettysburg, amid the newly-made graves of the thousands of fallen heroes who had given up their lives in the greatest battle of the Civil War.

This battle, marking, as it did, the turning point of the war, was fought on the first, second, and third days of the preceding July, a little more than four months before the great day of commemoration. In that tremendous battle, the Southern hosts, under command of General Robert E. Lee, had pushed far northward into the heart of Pennsylvania with a wide, encircling movement that threatened not only Washington, but Baltimore, Philadelphia, and even the metropolis of the North, New York City. Against their further advance, the splendid Army of the Potomac was massed under the command of General Meade. At Gettysburg, these two gigantic armies faced each other; and, on the morning of July First, they began their titanic struggle for the fate of the nation. For three whole days, amid unparalleled carnage, they strove for mastery with varying fortunes, the Union forces repelling assault after assault from their inner circle on the hills, until the ground was strewn with countless dead and dying. Never, it would seem, had there been such terrific slaughter; never such acts of unexampled heroism. Both sides left upwards of twenty thousand dead upon the field; and neither could have stood the havoc much longer than it was destined to continue. With the destruction of the very flower of the Confederate army in Pickett's last gallant charge to the breastworks of the Union forces, the Confederate hopes were dashed, and at last the slaughter ceased. The Southern armies, decimated and shattered, withdrew from the field of action, retiring under fire to the Old Dominion, and leaving a costly but splendid and ghastly victory to perch upon the banners of the Northern forces.

Hastily, the dead were buried where they lay upon the field,

but such interment was thought unworthy of these heroes; and, accordingly, a movement soon developed to set apart a certain portion of the field on Cemetery Ridge as a fitting resting place—a national cemetery to receive the bodies of the dead and to commemorate their deeds of sacrifice and valor.

To mark the dedication of this hallowed ground with appropriate ceremony, an invitation was sent to Edward Everett, then reputed to be America's most eloquent speaker, requesting him to be the orator-of-the-day; and several weeks later, in fact only seventeen days before the ceremonies, purely as an after-thought, President Lincoln was also invited to make "a few appropriate remarks."

So pressed was Lincoln by the manifold duties of his office that he had almost no time to prepare in any adequate way for this occasion. Yet, he saw in this ceremony a great opportunity for exhortation of his fellow-countrymen to persevere in the struggle, until the Union was saved; and, before leaving Washington by special train for Gettysburg, he succeeded in jotting down on a piece of White House stationery about one half of his proposed address. It was impossible for him to complete its composition until after his arrival in Gettysburg; and then, only in the quiet early morning hours of the day the address was delivered, was he able to write out its concluding sentences.

By ten o'clock in the morning, a formal procession including many notable persons and various military and civic organizations, moved through the streets to the cemetery where a speaker's platform was erected on the site of the present central monument. There the vast assemblage waited for more than half an hour before the orator-of-the-day appeared; and then, after a prayer of invocation and the reading of letters from General Meade and General Winfield Scott regretting

their inability to attend, the Honorable Edward Everett was introduced to deliver his tribute to the dead.

Never was an orator better fitted by native talent and early training, as well as by long experience in public life and in the world of letters, to perform this function. Much was expected of Everett, and his performance measured up to the highest expectations of his auditors. For a full hour, he fascinated the immense concourse of people by his classical eulogy of the dead, and by his most dramatic and most accurate narration of every detail of the battle that was being commemorated. At this point, he might very fittingly have closed his address, but the thoughts inspired by the occasion made such an ending quite impossible. Speaking on and on through a second full hour, he held his audience in rapt attention, while he traced out the causes for the war and fixed upon the South the blame for this fearful carnage, while he destroyed root and branch every effort to justify the act of secession and rebellion, and called upon the North to give up hope of conciliation now until the Federal armies had gone forward to the ultimate victory.

The truly great discourse of Mr. Everett was at last concluded in a brilliant peroration, the echoes of which merged in the long-continued and hearty applause of the multitude. A solemn dirge was rendered next by a choir of one hundred voices, and then it was Lincoln's turn to speak.

When he was introduced, there was the usual craning of necks and expressions of "Down in front!"—accompanied by crowding and pushing among those who then had their first opportunity to see the great President. For a time, Lincoln stood patiently waiting for his audience to become quiet; and then, when an absolute silence prevailed, he began to speak in the high shrill tones, to which his friends in Illinois had become accustomed, and which enabled him to make himself heard in the largest out-of-doors gatherings. He spoke with

the utmost deliberation, only once glancing at the manuscript he held in his left hand, and only once showing any sign of agitation, when his lips quivered and his voice broke during the utterance of the thought that "the world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here."

To those who saw Lincoln on this occasion, it appeared that he had stood before them not more than three or four minutes, and some were sure it was not more than two minutes. Scarcely had the people adjusted themselves to hear him, when it seemed that he had concluded his few remarks and had disappeared from view. Many of his auditors were dazed; few had been given time to grasp the full meaning of his thoughts; and nearly all were agreed that it was a pity he could not have made a real speech on such a great occasion.

There was no applause from the audience during the utterance of Lincoln's address, and only perfunctory applause at its conclusion. Hence, Lincoln felt that his performance had been a failure, as he had anticipated; and, if he could have heard remarks about it that were made by those on the platform, he would have been surer still that it was a failure. "It was not what I expected from him. I am disappointed," said Mr. Everett. "He has made a failure, and I am sorry for it. His speech is not equal to him," said Secretary Seward. And even Lincoln's close friend, Mr. Lamon, the Marshal of the District of Columbia, was compelled to say: "I am sorry that it does not impress me at all as one of his great speeches."

In bitter disappointment, Lincoln traveled back to Washington, feeling more and more certain, as the hours passed during the journey, that he had utterly failed to do justice to the occasion. Imagine his surprise, therefore, when on the following morning, he received a note from Mr. Everett saying: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near

to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

With the publication of this address in the daily newspapers throughout the country, people generally began to appreciate more and more its depth of meaning and its literary value; but even then, it must be said that America did not fully recognize its worth, until British critics in the Saturday *Review,* the London *Spectator,* and the Edinburgh *Review,* spoke of it as "an address without a parallel since the eulogy by Pericles on the heroic dead of the Peloponnesian War."

Gradually it dawned upon the American people that here, indeed, was a great masterpiece. Gradually they began to perceive that probably never in the whole course of history had there ever been an address of dedication "so pertinent, so brief, yet so comprehensive; so terse, yet so eloquent; linking the deeds of the present to the thoughts of the future, with words so simple, and in such living, original, yet exquisitely molded and maximlike phrases." Gradually, therefore, critics everywhere soon came to believe, and have continued to believe with one accord, that "out of a few, simple, plain, commonplace sentences familiar to all, President Lincoln at Gettysburg constructed an oration that will be the wonder and admiration of the world for all time—an oration that will rank as one of the great crowning triumphs of modern literary achievement."

Abraham Lincoln: The Gettysburg Address
November 19, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that

nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate; we cannot consecrate; we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Historical Setting of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

The last great literary and oratorical triumph of Lincoln was his *Second Inaugural Address,* delivered at noon on March 4, 1865, from the east portico of the Capitol. This speech and his *Gettysburg Address* are ranked together by nearly every modern critic as "literary gems that will live as long as the language that he spoke or the nation that he served."

Written while the Civil War was still in progress, but when its end was clearly seen, this speech bears the mark of Lincoln's sadness for a nation sorely stricken, while yet it shows

the man of sorrow to be a man of iron, where wrong must be converted into right, and where the right must not be tainted with commingling with the wrong.

It is not known just when this great message, so much resembling in its nature the farewell admonition of Washington to his fellow-countrymen, was written by its author, but certain it is that three years before its utterance, Lincoln had come to believe that the war was a scourge placed by God upon the people of both North and South as a retribution for the sins of both, out of which at last the triumph of righteousness and justice was to come. Certain it is also that Lincoln had formulated some of the ideas for this address, when he met the peace commissioners of the Confederate States in February at Hampton Roads, and demanded of them two conditions of peace; namely, union and emancipation; and even more certain is it that he was preparing for this utterance when he forced through Congress, on the Third of March, the Thirteenth Amendment to perpetuate the blessings of emancipation for the negro race.

The most conspicuous preparation of the thought of this address came, however, during the three or four months preceding its delivery, when Lincoln, sure of the outcome of the war, grappled with the problem of reconstruction and formulated his own plan for readmitting the States that had joined in the rebellion. He knew that his policy of immediate readmission and total forgiveness for his erring brethren of the South, would meet with stout resistance from the "Invincibles" of Congress, who wished to treat the Southern States as "conquered provinces" or as "national territories"; but for the struggle that was to come, he was prepared, not merely to defend his policy, but also to coerce Congress, and, if need be, to become a martyr in the cause.

At no time in his career was his mind more settled, or his calm resolution more fixed to do what was right in the sight of God than it was on the morning of March 4, when, for the second time, he was to take the oath of office.

The day of his inauguration dawned in a most unpropitious way, with a cold, bleak rain that continued to fall upon the assembled thousands throughout the morning, until it seemed as if the ceremonies of induction must be performed indoors within the Senate-Chamber; but just at noon, the rain ceased, and it was decided, after all, to proceed with the ceremonies as usual on the east portico of the Capitol.

When Lincoln appeared to take the oath, a single burst of sunlight came through the clouds, and lighted up his features like a halo, it is said. So miraculous was this incident, so beautiful was it as an omen of the future, that Lincoln stood almost unnerved with his right hand raised to take the oath. The assembled thousands cheered him with long-continued, and thunderous applause, which he was able to silence only after he again raised his right hand to command attention. Then, with a full strong voice, that carried to the utmost limits of the throng, he delivered to his listeners that masterpiece, which his admirers have likened to the sublime eloquence of the great prophets of Israel and Judah, and to the matchless words of the Master in His *Sermon on the Mount.*

Of this address, Carl Schurz has said: "It poured out the whole devotion and tenderness of his great soul. It had all the solemnity of a father's last admonition and blessing to his children before he lay down to die. . . No American President had ever spoken words like these to the American people. America never had had a President who found such words in the depth of his heart."

Like the *Gettysburg Address,* however, the *Second Inaugural*

never was fully appreciated in America, until English critics had given it an immortal place in literature. When Gladstone read it, he said: "I am taken captive by so striking an utterance as this. I see in it the effect of sharp trial, when rightly borne, to raise man to a higher level of thought and action. It is by cruel suffering that nations are sometimes born to a better life. So it is with individual man. Lincoln's words show that upon him anxiety and sorrow have wrought their full effect."

The London *Spectator* joined with Gladstone in its praise, and said: "For ourselves, we cannot read his last inaugural address, delivered only five weeks before his assassination, without a renewed conviction that it is the noblest political document known to history, and should have, for the nation and the statesmen he left behind him, something of sacred and almost prophetic authority."

As English critics joined in the praise of this great speech, gradually America saw in it also the work of a master mind; and, now, throughout the world, it is recognized as one of the imperishable gems of literature, a great oratorical triumph, and more than that, a prophetic voice of admonition from out the past to guide the future conduct of the nation.

Abraham Lincoln: The Second Inaugural Address
March 4, 1865

Fellow-countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued seemed very fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still

absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented.

The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avoid it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy with war—seeking to dissolve the Union and divide the effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came. One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union by war, while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease when, or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any

men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayer of both could not be answered. That of neither has been fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh. If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses, which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern there any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondmen's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

EARLY ORATORY OF LINCOLN—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Lincoln: *On the Spot Resolutions* (Jan. 12, 1848)—See *Life and Works of Lincoln* (Centenary edition 1907) II, 119-133.

2. Lincoln: *On Military Heroes* (July 27, 1848)—See ibid. II, 157-180.
3. Lincoln: *The Peoria Speech* (1854)—See ibid. II, 218-275.
4. Lincoln: *Republican Convention Speech* (1856)—See ibid. II, 275-302.

ORATORY LEADING UP TO LINCOLN'S ELECTION—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Lincoln: The *"House Divided against Itself" Speech* (1858)—See *Works of Lincoln* III, 35-46; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) III, 168-183; Shurter's *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* (1906) 133-142; Putnam's *Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1913) 1-13.
2. *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1858)—See Putnam's edition (1913).
3. William H. Seward: *The Irrepressible Conflict* (1858)—See Bradley's *Orations and Arguments* (1804) 298-310; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations,* III, 195-207; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) V, 1849-1864; Bryan's *World's Famous Orations,* (1906) IX, 177-185.
4. Lincoln: *The Cooper Institute Speech* (Feb. 27, 1860)—See *Works of Lincoln* V, 14-42.

ORATORY OF THE PERIOD OF SECESSION—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. Phillips: *Lincoln's Election* (Nov. 7, 1860)—See Phillips's *Speeches, Lectures, Letters* (1863) 294-318.
2. Alexander H. Stephens: *Address to Georgia Legislature* (Nov. 14, 1860)—See Johnston and Browne's *Life of A. H. Stephens* (1878) 564-580; Stephens's *War Between the States* II, 279-300.
3. Robert Toombs: *Let Us Depart in Peace* (Jan. 7, 1861)—See Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) IX, 428-435.
4. Phillips: *Disunion* (Jan. 20, 1861)—See Phillips's *Speeches,* etc., 343-370.
5. Jefferson Davis: *On Withdrawal from the Union* (Jan. 21, 1861)—See Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) III, 320-329; Martin's *The Great Parliamentary Battle;* Brewer, V, 36-41.
6. Henry Winter Davis: *Refusal to Part Company with South* (Feb. 7, 1861) See Brewer, V, 27-31.
7. Lincoln: *Farewell to Neighbors at Springfield* (Feb. 11, 1861)—See Bryan's *World's Famous Orations,* IX, 238-239.
8. Jefferson Davis: *Inaugural Address* (February 18, 1861)—See Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 32-38; Brewer, V, 41-45.
9. Judah P. Benjamin: *On Leaving the Senate* (Feb. 21, 1861)—See Brewer, I, 401-408.
10. Lincoln: *The First Inaugural* (Mar. 4, 1861)—See *Works of Lincoln;* Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 16-31; Bryan's *W. F. M.,* IX, 240-253.
11. Alexander H. Stephens: *The "Corner-Stone" Address* (Mar. 21, 1861)—

See Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 39-50; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) V, 1936-1942; Brewer, IX, 283-286.

12. Phillips: *Under the Flag* (April 21, 1861)—See Phillips's *Speeches, Lectures, Letters,* 396-414.
13. Stephen A. Douglas: *The Issues of 1861* (April 25, 1861)—See Brewer's *World's Best Orations,* V, 302-304.

ORATORY OF THE CIVIL WAR—Complete or Slightly Abridged Speech-Texts.

1. John C. Breckinridge: *Suppression of Insurrection* (Aug. 1, 1861)—See Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 51-62.
2. Edward D. Baker: *Reply to Breckinridge* (Aug. 1, 1861)—See Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 62-81.
3. Phillips: *Toussaint L'Ouverture* (1861-1863)—See Phillips's *Speeches, etc.* (1863) 468-494; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VI, 846-867.
4. Henry Ward Beecher: *The Liverpool Address* (Oct. 16, 1863)—See Beecher's *Patriotic Addresses* (1887) 516-544; Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 93-122; Bryan's *W. F. O.,* X, 9-26.
5. Edward Everett: *Gettysburg Address* (Nov. 19, 1863)—See Everett's *Orations and Speeches,* IV.
6. Lincoln: *Gettysburg Address* (Nov. 19, 1863)—See *Works of Lincoln.*
7. Lincoln: *The Second Inaugural* (Mar. 4, 1865)—See *Works of Lincoln,* V, 223-225; Johnston and Woodburn, IV, 125-128; Bryan's *W. F. O.,* IX, 255-258.
8. Beecher: *The Flag-Raising at Fort Sumter* (April 14, 1865)—See Beecher's *Patriotic Addresses,* 676-697; Brewer, I, 352-370.

Historical Backgrounds

See E. D. Adams's *Great Britain and the American Civil War;* Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Chadwick's *Causes of the Civil War;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Curry's *The Southern States in Relation to U. S.;* Davis's *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Foster's *Century of American Diplomacy;* Greeley's *The American Conflict;* Helper's *Impending Crisis;* Johnston's *American Politics;* Logan's *The Great Conspiracy;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Goldwin Smith's *United States;* Stephens's *The War between the States;* Von Holst's *Constitutional History of the U. S.;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America;* Wilson's *Division and Reunion.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Beecher, Henry Ward—See biographies by Abbott, Beecher and Scoville, Barrows, Howard, and Hibben.

Benjamin, Judah P.—See biography by Pierce Butler.

Davis, Jefferson—See biographies by Alfriend, Pollard, and Dodd.

Douglas, Stephen A.—See biographies by Sheahan, Johnson, Carr, and Willis.

Lincoln, Abraham—See biographies by Nicolay and Hay, Morse, Arnold, Hapgood, Stephenson, Tarbell, Barton, Charnwood, Raymond, Herndon, Lamon, Britt, and Sandburg.

Phillips, Wendell—See biographies by Austin, Martyn, and Sears.

Stephens, Alexander H.—See biographies by Johnston and Browne, and Pendleton.

Toombs, Robert—See biography by Pleasant A. Stovall.

Yancey, William L.—See biography by Du Bose.

Miscellaneous Personal Backgrounds

Andrews's *Perfect Tribute;* Carr's *Lincoln at Gettysburg; Outlook* 118:243-244; *Literary Digest,* 88:29; Joseph H. Choate's *Lincoln* (1910); Schurz's *Lincoln* (1892); Dodge's *Lincoln;* Rankin's *Lincoln;* McClure's *Lincoln and Men of My Times;* Forney's *Anecdotes of Public Men* (see Baker); James G. Blaine's *Twenty Years of Congress;* John Sherman's *Recollections of Forty Years;* Carr's *My Day and Generation.*

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Lincoln's *"House Divided against Itself" Speech*

I. What internal evidence is there that Lincoln was familiar with: (1) Webster's exordium in *Reply to Hayne;* (2) *Gospel of Mark,* 3:25; (3) *Ecclesiastes,* 9:4; (4) Webster's peroration in *Reply to Hayne?*

II. What were: (1) the Dred Scott decision; (2) the present political dynasty; (3) the quarrel between Douglas and the head of the dynasty; (4) the single point on which Douglas had voted with the Republicans; (5) the strange, discordant elements that met to form the Republican party in 1856?

III. What were the dates of: (1) the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill; (2) Douglas's announcement of his "care-not" policy—See story of Lecompton Constitution; (3) the abolition of the African slave trade?

IV. Was the threat to reopen the African slave trade a mere hoax?—See Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power,* II, 614-619.

V. What indirect reference is made to Horace Greeley?—See Johnston and Woodburn's *Am. Orations,* III, 380.

On Douglas's *Reply to Lincoln at Chicago*

I. What evidence is there that Douglas was adept at the method of refutation: (1) by *reductio ad absurdum;* (2) by setting up straw men?

II. Do you take exception to Douglas's statements: (1) that Lincoln said there must be uniformity in the local laws of all the States; (2) that the framers of the Constitution never contemplated any uniformity in the internal concerns of the States—See Lincoln's *Cooper Institute Speech;* (3) that uniformity in respect to some, but not all, internal concerns would destroy our greatest safeguards; (4) that Douglas yielded to the decisions of the Supreme Court?

On Lincoln's *Reply to Douglas at Chicago*

I. What internal evidence is there that Lincoln was familiar with: (1) John Quincy Adams's speech on *The Right of Petition;* (2) *Gospel of Matthew,* 5:48?

II. What evidence is there that Lincoln was familiar with the dilemma as a method of argument and the proper way of refuting it?

III. In the first eighty-two years of the nation's history, what periods of rest from the slavery agitation did the people actually experience?

IV. What effect had Eli Whitney upon the ultimate extinction of slavery by peaceable means?

V. What remote hope for the ultimate extinction of slavery was there from the Republican doctrine of exclusion from the Territories?

VI. What subtle appeal does Lincoln make to those who feared the Know Nothing element in the Republican party?

On Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*

I. What was the exact date of the birth of the American nation?

II. What clew have we that Jefferson may have put the same interpretation, that Lincoln did, on the expression, *all men are created equal?*—See Jefferson's first draft of the Declaration of Independence.

III. When had Lincoln used previously practically the same thought as that with which he opened his address?—See Barton's *Lincoln,* II, 208.

IV. What indirect reference does Lincoln make to the Emancipation Proclamation?

V. What discouraging examples of failure of republican movements had occurred: (1) in Europe since the founding of the United States; (2) in Mexico in 1863?

VI. Is there any evidence that Lincoln fully appreciated the significance of the battle of Gettysburg as we appreciate it?—See Barton, II, 226-228.

VII. What pressing occasion had Lincoln to call upon the living to dedicate themselves to the great unfinished task remaining before them?—See Barton, II, 241-247.

VIII. Where did Lincoln get the expression, *of the people, by the people, for the people?*—See Barton, II, 208-209.

On Lincoln's *Secona Inaugural*

I. What internal evidence is there that Lincoln was familiar with: (1) *Genesis,* 3:19; (2) *Matthew,* 7:1; (3) *Isaiah,* 14:27; (4) *Luke,* 17:1; (5) *Job,* 14:13-14; (6) *Psalms,* 19:9?

II. In Lincoln's *First Inaugural,* what details of the course to be pursued did he announce?

III. At the time of the *Second Inaugural,* what was the exact military situation?

IV. At the time of the *First Inaugural* (1) what was the object sought by the Confederate commissioners in Washington; (2) what Confederate agents besides the commissioners were in Washington—See Charnwood's *Lincoln,* 209-210, 239; (3) how far was Lincoln willing to go in offering to protect slavery in the original slave states?—See Elson's *Hist. of U. S.,* 640.

V. How do Lincoln's words foreshadow his attitude toward the problems of reconstruction in contrast with the attitude of Congress?—See Elson's *Hist. of U. S.,* 786-790; Stephenson's *Lincoln,* 395-414.

Dictionary Studies From Lincoln and Douglas

From Lincoln:

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. accelerate 2. admonition 3. adventitious 4. aptest 5. arrest 6. astound 7. aught 8. combination piece 9. compounded 10. consecrate 11. consummation 12. crisis 13. dedicate 14. deprecate 15. dissevered 16. dynasty 17. endorsed 18. engross 19. fundamental 20. hallow 21. insurgent 22. intimation 23. launching 24. niche 25. pampered 26. particular 27. perpetuate 28. providence 29. quibbling 30. regale 31. unrequited 32. warranted 33. wholly.

From Douglas:

1. amalgamation 2. civil 3. contemplated 4. despotism 5. either 6. posterity 7. relentlessly 8. sages.

CHAPTER XV

HENRY WARD BEECHER

Beecher's Place Among Lyceum and Pulpit Orators

Henry Ward Beecher was one of the world's foremost pulpit orators of all times—a preacher, whose fame for eloquence has equaled that of Saint Chrysostom and Saint Bernard, Martin Luther and John Knox, George Whitefield and the two Wesleys in former times, and that of Charles Spurgeon and Phillips Brooks in his own time.

But Henry Ward Beecher was not merely a pulpit orator of great renown: he was also one of the foremost platform orators of America in the palmiest days of the Lyceum period, when men like John B. Gough, Wendell Phillips, George William Curtis, and Robert Ingersoll were holding vast audiences spell-bound by the magic of their eloquence.

Like Theodore Parker, his early contemporary, Henry Ward Beecher was both a preacher and a reformer, a man who believed most heartily in mixing religion with politics, and in making his pulpit a means for adjusting man's relation to man, as well as for adjusting his relation to God.

With this view of his functions as a preacher, Henry Ward Beecher became a powerful orator in the anti-slavery movement, in the movement to establish the Republican party, in the election of Lincoln, in the prosecution of the war against secession, in the settlement of the problems of reconstruction, in the movement to check political corruption after the war, and in various movements at various times to modernize the doctrines, and the practice of the church.

For fifty years, between 1837 and 1887, Henry Ward Beecher employed his powers as an orator to uplift and improve the condition of his fellow-men. Until 1847, however, he had merely a local reputation for eloquence. Then, suddenly, he burst upon the nation with meteoric brilliance as one of its greatest pulpit orators; and, sixteen years later, in the midst of the Civil War, he acquired world-wide fame for his platform eloquence, which he maintained with undiminished luster for a quarter of a century until his death.

The events in American history that provided Beecher with themes for his greatest eloquence were: the Clay Compromise Measures of 1850 with the *Fugitive Slave Law;* the *Kansas-Nebraska Bill* of 1854, with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; the trial of popular sovereignty in Kansas and Nebraska, with the consequent organization of Emigrant Aid Societies in the North and the development of civil war in Kansas; the formation of the Republican party and the campaign of Frémont for the presidency in 1856; the John Brown raid at Harper's Ferry in 1859; the campaign for the election of Lincoln in 1860; the futile attempts to compromise with the South in the winter of 1860 and 1861; the attack upon Fort Sumter and the raising of Union armies in April, 1861; the capture of the Confederate emissaries, Mason and Slidell, on the English steamer *Trent,* in October, 1861; the blockade of the South, the hostility of England, and the building of Confederate cruisers in British ship-yards in 1862; the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863; the fall of the Confederacy, and the assassination of Lincoln in 1865; the struggle between President Johnson and Congress over reconstruction in 1866; the establishment and maintenance of carpet-bag governments in the South, the passage of civil-rights bills to protect negro freedmen, and the extension of amnesty to Confederate lead-

ers during the period of reconstruction; the religious upheaval over Darwinism and the German "higher criticism" of the Bible that occurred in the seventies; and the political upheaval represented by the Mugwump rebellion within the Republican party that developed in the presidential campaign of 1884.

In decade following decade, therefore, after 1850, Beecher spoke on themes that engaged the interest of America's greatest orators. In the decade of the fifties, he was prominent as an orator on the same themes that claimed attention from Webster, Clay, and Calhoun, from Seward, Sumner, Chase, Parker, Phillips, Douglas, and Lincoln. In the decade of the sixties, he was prominent while all the secession orators were active; while Wigfall, Benjamin, Davis, Yancey, Toombs, Iverson, Stephens, and Rhett were breaking up the Union; and while, on the Northern side, Lincoln, Baker, Phillips, Sumner, Wade, Thadeus Stevens, and Henry Winter Davis were combating the rebellion. And in the decade of the seventies and early eighties, he was equally prominent while Carl Schurz and Lucius Q. C. Lamar were advocating clemency; while James G. Blaine and Benjamin H. Hill were struggling over the question of amnesty; while Robert Ingersoll was upholding Republicanism and denouncing orthodox Christianity; while George William Curtis was eloquently demanding civil service reform; and while Dwight L. Moody and Phillips Brooks were creating in their separate ways a new religious fervor among Christian believers.

The age in which Beecher lived was thus one of superabundant and brilliant eloquence. It was an age equal to any other, however great, in the history of the world's oratory and in it Beecher lived as a peer, if not as a superior, to all his renowned contemporaries.

For his tremendous influence on the platform, he will be

remembered with John B. Gough, the temperance lecturer, and Wendell Phillips, the anti-slavery agitator, as one of the great triumvirate of American Lyceum orators; and, for his acknowledged supremacy in the pulpit, he will be accorded a place, with Phillips Brooks, among the world's greatest pulpit orators of all times.

The Life of Henry Ward Beecher

Henry Ward Beecher was America's most eloquent pulpit orator, and one of her most popular and most influential platform speakers—a religious, political, and social reformer, whose spoken word created, moulded, and directed public opinion in crisis after crisis of the nation's history before, during, and after the Civil War.

Like Lyman Beecher, his father, he was the outspoken foe of the prevalent vices of his time,—intemperance, avarice, gambling, political chicanery, and financial double-dealing. Like Harriet Beecher Stowe, his sister, he was the mortal foe of slavery; and with Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, and Theodore Parker, he became one of the early leaders in the anti-slavery movement, though he differed from them greatly in his means for combating slavery and upheld, not Abolition, but Free-Soil, doctrines, such as were preached by Sumner, Chase, Seward, and Lincoln.

Throughout the Civil War, he was Lincoln's most staunch supporter; and, after that war, he still maintained Lincoln's theories of reconstruction,—for a time upholding the Republican organization as represented by Grant and Hayes, but finally asserting his independence, and rebelling against the corruption within the party that had for so long claimed his allegiance.

This powerful pulpit, and platform orator was born at Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1813. He received his education in the famous Boston Latin School, at the Mount Pleasant Institute, and at Amherst College, from which he graduated in 1834. Then, following in the footsteps of his distinguished father, he, like all his six brothers, determined to enter the ministry; and under the tutelage of his father, who had recently become president of Lane Theological Seminary at Cincinnati, Ohio, he made his preparation for this profession.

At the same time, however, while living across the Ohio river from Kentucky, he had an opportunity to study the problems of slavery at first hand; for, during his seminary years, between 1834 and 1837, the great American anti-slavery agitation began. The sight of fugitive slaves escaping across the river was common. Frequent riots occurred in Cincinnati over the slave question. Discussion became hot in the Seminary; the Beecher home was threatened with mob violence; and the Seminary was split in two by the contending factions, with the result that many anti-slavery students and instructors broke away to found Oberlin College.

In all this agitation, the young man took a prominent part, being in fact a member of a volunteer constabulary to check riots in the city; so that probably his ministerial studies were neither over zealous nor thorough.

Beecher's first church was in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, during the pioneer days of that community; and his second in Indianapolis, when that city had scarcely five thousand inhabitants and was just emerging from the stumps of the clearing, where the settlement was established.

At Indianapolis Beecher made the following comment about his early preaching on the anti-slavery question: "Nobody there was allowed to say a word on the subject of slavery.

They were all red-hot out there then; and one of the Elders said, 'If an Abolitionist comes here, I will lead a mob to put him down.' I was a young preacher. I had some pluck; and I felt that was a subject that ought to be preached upon; but I knew that, just as sure as I preached an Abolition sermon, they would blow me up sky high, and my usefulness in that parish would be gone. Yet I was determined they should hear it, first or last. The question was, 'How shall I do it?' I recollect one of the earliest efforts I made in that direction was in a sermon on some general topic. It was necessary to illustrate a point, and I did it by picturing a father ransoming his son from captivity among the Algerines, and glorying in his love of liberty and his fight against bondage. They all thought I was going to apply it to slavery, but I did not. I applied it to my subject, and it passed off; and they all drew a long breath. It was not long before I had another illustration from that quarter. And so, before I had been there a year, I had gone over all the sore spots of slavery, in illustrating the subjects of Christian experience and doctrine."

In this way, Beecher converted his congregation from a strong pro-slavery group to a strong anti-slavery group; but there were other points on which he had to convert them also. Indianapolis at that time, like many other pioneer communities, was full of drunken debauchery and was infested with gamblers and confidence men. The general tone of the community was low and vicious; and, to combat such a condition, Beecher delivered, with great effect, in 1841, a still famous series of addresses, entitled *Lectures to Young Men,* in which he attacked boldly all the prevalent vices of his hearers. So outspoken, in fact, was he in these addresses, that one of the low characters of the town threatened to shoot him, but did not dare to carry out the threat.

After eight years of such preaching, Beecher reluctantly accepted a call from the newly organized Plymouth Church in Brooklyn; and there, in 1847, he began his labors, that continued until his death in 1887; when, by his eloquence, he had made Plymouth Church the most famous church in America, a Mecca for religious pilgrims from two continents, and a shrine of patriotism for all Americans, whose heart and soul had been poured into the struggle for freedom during the Civil War.

At first, Beecher's congregation numbered only a handful, but soon it increased under the influence of his novel preaching to embrace more than three thousand regular attendants upon his services. He was everywhere criticised for his failure to observe some of the older clerical conventions, and especially for his insistence upon giving a place to humor in his discourses; but, in spite of this criticism, or more likely on account of it, people flocked to hear him. His style, however, was not the only subject of adverse comment; for his subject matter also brought down upon him severe denunciation. Because he chose to lay little stress on dogma and gave all his efforts to promote upright living; because he never minced words; because he delivered terrible philippics against intemperance, avarice, and political abuses that prevailed about him; and, most of all, because he became the fearless and outspoken advocate of anti-slavery; he was roundly denounced and scheduled to be a martyr for his revolutionary beliefs. Yet the more he was denounced, the more popular he became, and his fame spread throughout the land as one of America's most powerful and heroic leaders in the cause of freedom.

At the time when Beecher began his preaching in Brooklyn, the slavery question was creating a great disturbance in national politics by reason of the recent introduction into

Congress of the Wilmot Proviso to exclude slavery from the territories acquired from Mexico. Every red-blooded man of the period, of course, had his convictions on the measure and expressed them as he chose. So had Beecher. But the general public and the clergy expected him to refrain, as a minister, from expressing them. For Beecher to remain silent on such a theme, however, was impossible; and to make clear his intentions in this regard, he notified his new congregation in his first evening sermon that he proposed to apply the principles of Jesus Christ to intemperance, to slavery, and to all other great national sins. What effect this announcement would have on his congregation, he cared not; but he felt that it was only fair to them to make known his plans.

During the second year of his Brooklyn pastorate, he inaugurated a system of combating slavery that was most unique. In his own pulpit he would receive fugitive slaves who were trying to make good their escape from Southern slave-catchers. In place of the regular services, he would impersonate a Southern slave-auctioneer, calling for bids on the human chattels he exhibited; and, from money showered down upon him by his parishioners in this dramatic setting, he would buy out of slavery these fugitives, who had come to him for aid.

This was but the prelude, however, to his great anti-slavery agitation. His most effective work in this cause began in 1850, when he denounced the Clay Compromise Measures and anticipated William H. Seward in announcing the "higher law" doctrine, which placed God's law, as expressed by the individual conscience, above the Constitution. In respect to the *Fugitive Slave Law,* he recommended: "Obedience to laws, even though they sin against me: but disobedience to every law that commands me to sin."

For four years, he was content to fight slavery by denouncing it in the pulpit and by defeating the objects of the slave-catchers. But, thereafter, he made his opposition more direct and more forceful. In 1854 another great crisis in the slavery agitation was reached. In that year, Douglas proposed to abolish the Missouri Compromise to give effect to his principle of popular sovereignty in the Kansas-Nebraska legislation; and Beecher said of this proposal that it was "the death struggle of slavery for expansion, seeing that she must have more room to breathe or suffocate. All question as to whether slavery shall be agitated is now at an end. The South says it shall be agitated, and she cannot help it. The mask is off, and all disguises are thrown to the winds, and the slave power stands out in its true character, making its last and most infamous demands upon the North. All we have to do is to say, No."

But the North did not say, No. The bill was passed. Popular sovereignty was given its trial. Emigrant Aid Societies were established, with Beecher's backing, to rush Free-Soil settlers into Kansas. Civil strife began in that Territory. And Beecher, at first reluctant to encourage violence, at last organized every effort to send to Free-Soil settlers in Kansas what became known as "Beecher's Bibles," which were in reality consignments of rifles shipped as "books."

Beecher, therefore, did aid and abet the Free-Soil fighters in the civil war of Kansas, at the time when Charles Sumner was struck down in the Senate, when the pro-slavery forces sacked the town of Lawrence, and when John Brown was engaged in the Pottawattomie Massacre; but this was to prevent the extension of slavery—not to suppress it by violence in the old slave States—and when, later, John Brown made his raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia, Beecher unreservedly condemned

the undertaking in these words: "By all the conscience of a man, and by all the faith of a Christian, and by all the zeal and warmth of a philanthropist, I protest against any counsels that lead to insurrection, servile war, and bloodshed. It is bad for the master, and bad for the slave, bad for all that are neighbors to them, bad for the whole land,—bad from beginning to end."

In this way, Beecher condemned the misguided fanaticism of Brown and his followers; and yet, in upholding the right to free speech, when Wendell Phillips was denied the use of all other platforms in New York to talk on John Brown, Beecher extended to him the use of his pulpit, and heard him deliver that famous address on *Harper's Ferry,* in which he proclaimed the lesson of the hour to be insurrection.

Beecher was an anti-slavery man, but one like Lincoln and Seward, rather than like Phillips and Garrison. He was one of the first prominent campaign speakers for the Republican party in 1856; and at that time he went up and down, throughout the North, to address audiences of eight or ten thousand in the open air advocating the election of Frémont.

For such work, he was bitterly denounced and told that he "should stick to his pulpit"; but, in spite of abuse, he kept to his task, and repeated his exertions for the Republican cause again in 1860. Then it was, that his opponents said: "His pulpit has been turned into a political engine to overthrow the institutions of the Southern States, to dissolve the Union, and to foment civil war." They said he was a man who dared "to attack, not those sinners who hear him, but those who are a thousand miles away." He was advised pointedly that "a trip to Europe, just then, would prove beneficial to his health," and that "his ease and comfort would be anything but safe in this country six months from then."

Such threats could not frighten him, and neither could disorderly bands of ruffians, who hurled stones through his church windows during the evening services. No public speaker did more in the winter months following Lincoln's election to combat the various plans for compromising principle to keep the South in the Union; and, then, when the great Civil War did actually break out, Beecher hailed it as a God-given opportunity to bring about emancipation. He converted his church into a supply base for the relief of Union armies passing to and from the battlefields. From his own congregation, he raised and equipped two regiments; and, from his own purse, he equipped still another. His two sons he sent into the service, glorying in the sacrifice he was making; and every Sunday morning he preached sermons that resounded like trumpet calls of freedom throughout the whole Union.

From the very outset, he was a close friend and personal adviser of Abraham Lincoln, having entertained him in his own house when Lincoln came to New York to deliver his *Cooper Institute Address* in 1860; but gradually he came to think that Lincoln was too slow and too deliberate in approaching the question of emancipation. Several of his sermons, therefore, in 1862, were rather harsh and severe in their criticism of the administration for its procrastination. At last, however, word was received that, by a military order, the President had emancipated the slaves of those who were fighting in the Confederate armies. The joy with which Beecher received this news was almost inexpressible; and, from Plymouth pulpit, he announced, in a tremendous burst of jubilation, that "the President's proclamation will sift the North, give unity to its people, simplicity to its policy, liberty to its army! . . . The Proclamation emancipates slaves in thrice thirty days. But it emancipates the Government and

the army to-day . . . God may peel me, and bark me, and strip me of my leaves, and do as he chooses with my earthly estate. I have lived long enough; I have had a good time. You cannot take back the blows I have given the Devil right in the face. I have uttered some words that will not die, because they are incorporated in the lives of men that will not die."

In the summer of 1863, Beecher was worn out by his efforts in behalf of the Union; and, accordingly, his church gave him three months' leave of absence in Europe to recuperate. He intended to make no speeches while in England; and, as a result of the hostility manifested there against the North by the upper classes, he became more determined than ever not to speak. In a towering rage against Great Britain, he departed for the continent, and there obtained much-needed rest while traveling. On his return journey, he was persuaded, however, that it was his duty to make plain to the masses the justice of the Union cause, and thereby to prevent further coöperation by the British government with the enemies of the Union in the South.

He, therefore, prepared a series of lectures to be delivered in all the principal cities of England and Scotland, and started out to convert the people to sympathize with the North rather than with the South. Everywhere, he was compelled to face the most turbulent and riotous audiences, who many times threatened his life if he attempted to speak; but in Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, and London, he beat down the mobs by his reasoning and his eloquence, though frequently he had to out-roar the lion to be heard, while again and again he had to wait for a lull in the storm to puncture the cat-calls and hisses of his opponents with his pungent reasoning and appeals for fair play.

This series of addresses gave Beecher an international repu-

tation as an orator, and one of his admiring critics has said that they, not only constituted "the greatest oratorical work of Mr. Beecher's life," but that they were without a parallel in their public effect since the time of Demosthenes, when the great Greek thundered in Athens against the on-coming tyranny of Philip of Macedon.

On Beecher's return to his native land, he was hailed as a conqueror by the American public. Though previously he had acquired a tremendous reputation as a popular orator on the Lyceum platform, his engagements now became so numerous that he had to refuse hundreds of opportunities to speak even when his audiences were glad to pay him his five-hundred-dollar fee for one night's lecturing.

Until the close of the war, Beecher continued to give his hearty support to Lincoln's administration; and, thereafter, he became most conspicuous in discussing problems of reconstruction. In 1868, in 1872, and in 1876, he was one of the most powerful campaign speakers for the Republican party, but in 1884 he demonstrated his independence by advocating strongly the election of Cleveland as a Democrat. In these latter years, he was also most active in trying to harmonize the new discoveries of science with the cardinal principles of the old religion. Every year, his reputation as an orator spread further and further, until, at last, when he died, in 1887, it could be said that people of every State but one in the Union, and of every community of any importance in the British Isles had been thrilled by his eloquence.

To mention all the famous speeches, sermons, and addresses delivered by Henry Ward Beecher would be impossible; yet it may not be invidious to say that, among his greatest utterances, were: his *Lectures to Young Men* in 1841; his *Address to the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society* in 1851; his

lecture on *Robert Burns* in 1859; his addresses on *The National Flag* and *The Camp: Its Dangers and Duties* in 1861; his *Liverpool Address* in 1863; his *Address at the Fort Sumter Flag-Raising* and his *Memorial Sermon for Lincoln* in 1865; his *Yale Lectures on Preaching* in 1872; his eight sermons on *Evolution and Religion* in 1878 and 1879; and his *Eulogy of Grant* in 1885.

By such utterances, Beecher won distinction as one of the world's great orators. According to one critic, his place was "near that of Demosthenes." As a reformer, this critic says that "he need fear no comparison with Wendell Phillips, John Bright, Mazzini, or Charles Sumner. In moral genius for statesmanship, he was the brother of Abraham Lincoln, and in the annals of the pulpit he can only be mentioned with the greatest names—those of Chrysostom, Bernard, Luther, Wesley, Whitefield, Chalmers, and Spurgeon."

Great as an anti-slavery agitator, great as a social and religious reformer, Henry Ward Beecher will be remembered, nevertheless, chiefly for his splendid services in behalf of the Union during the darkest days of the Civil War; for, in that period, it is said of him that "outside the army, and outside the government, no Northern man did more than he to support and to advance the Northern cause."

Historical Setting of Beecher's Liverpool Address

The addresses given by Henry Ward Beecher in England, in the fall of 1863, during one of the most critical periods in the Civil War, are justly regarded as a series of marvelous triumphs that have hardly been surpassed in the history of the world's oratory. Beginning with his speech at Manchester on October 9, Beecher was everywhere confronted with riotous

mobs for his audiences: in Glasgow, on October 13; in Edinburgh, on October 14; in Liverpool, on October 16; and in London, on October 20. In no single instance was the mob more tumultuous, and on no occasion was Beecher more heroically triumphant than when he battled for three hours to secure a hearing in Philharmonic Hall at Liverpool before an enraged audience of thugs and ruffians who had made up their minds to break up the meeting and place the speaker in jeopardy of life and limb.

When Beecher came to Liverpool, he found that the sympathy of the mob was utterly against him. They had not forgotten the insult to the British flag, when, two years before, a Northern commander, Captain Wilkes, had removed from the British steamer, *Trent,* the Confederate emissaries, Mason and Slidell; and they could not forget the *Morrill Tariff,* that was ruining their export trade of cotton fabrics, or the Northern blockade of Southern ports, that was cutting off the supply of raw cotton from their factories. Everywhere about them, they saw their ships lying at the wharves, and their factory workers reduced to destitution by the shutting-down of the textile mills. They were, therefore, ready to throw their influence in favor of the South, and were anxious that their ship-yards should build privateers for the Confederacy, in order that English labor might be given employment, while it aided in breaking down the blockade of Southern ports.

The task of Beecher, then, was to convince these people on the verge of starvation, that they should go ahead and starve, in order that the North, their competitor in trade, might continue a seemingly endless and hopeless war, and in order that the abstract principle of freedom for the slave, in a far-off foreign land, might at last be made an accomplished fact.

As Beecher stepped from the train at Liverpool, he noticed

that all the streets were placarded with blood-red posters announcing that he was coming and calling upon Englishmen to suppress his right of free speech. These posters had evidently accomplished their purpose; for, at the appointed time of meeting, Philharmonic Hall was thronged to its utmost capacity, with a mob described by one witness as consisting of "chokers, hustlers, and burglars with their jimmies in their pockets; of fighting robbers with brass knuckles—the whole set in a vast thief-constituency, as thick as rats in sewers." "These were the disputants," said this witness, "whom the emissaries of the slave-power called upon to refute the arguments of the Brooklyn clergyman."

Though Beecher did not know it at the time, he learned later that, both before and after his entrance into the hall, his life was seriously threatened; for there were Southern sympathizers in the boxes and galleries who had come armed, and who were kept quiet only by a few friends of the North who stood over them with bowie-knives and pistols.

In such an atmosphere, Beecher stepped to the front of the platform on which were gathered many of the Congregational clergymen of England and Wales; and there, attempting to speak, he was greeted with such prolonged groans, cheers, and cat-calls that he found it impossible for some time to get beyond his first utterance of "Ladies and Gentlemen."

For more than an hour and a half, Beecher struggled merely to be heard; and he said later that, sometimes during that period, he "felt like a shipmaster attempting to preach on board of a ship, through a speaking trumpet, with a tornado on the sea, and mutiny among the men."

One writer on this great event in the history of oratory has said that "Mr. Beecher spoke at Liverpool with all the incidents of a battlefield, with charges and counter-charges, in-

cessant shouting, and constant interruptions on the one side, while the orator's business was to fire his pistol-shots of sentences in every lull. Occasionally there would be a rifle-shot with all his vocal power, and once in a while there came a cannon-shot with a long reverberating roar."

In spite of Beecher's utmost efforts to cajole or sting his audience into attention, at times he was utterly drowned out by the uproar; and, on one such occasion, he calmly seated himself on the parapet of the platform and told the reporters that he was sorry to detain them so long; while, on another occasion, he said, if the meeting would not hear him, he would address his remarks to the newspaper correspondents before him. Then, later, he attempted to read something from Lincoln, and such a hubbub arose that he calmly went on talking to the reporters, and the mob, becoming curious, stopped to hear.

Every conceivable device, Beecher used to conquer his audience, but the one that, after all, was most effective was his appeal to the Englishman's love of fair play. This came after the first hour and a half of the unequal struggle; and then either the leathern throats of the mob were sore, or many had yielded in admiration of the speaker's pluck. At least, the speaker was permitted to go on with less constant interruption to the end of his three hours of speaking.

There was some doubt even then whether he had carried the meeting with his reasoning, and the test was to come on the matter of extending to him a vote of thanks. To assist in bringing about such a conclusion, the chairman suggested that "he expected the vote would be joined in by all the representatives of American slaveholders present, from the fact that they had had more instruction that night than they had apparently received during all the previous part of their lives."

This remark was greeted with every conceivable expression of approval and disapproval; but, when the vote was taken, it was carried with long and loud cheering.

The mob had been conquered, and Henry Ward Beecher, by this great feat, had been lifted from the position of one of America's foremost pulpit orators to the higher level of one of the world's most eloquent speakers of all times, whose name and deeds might bear comparison even with those of the great Greek who thundered in Athens against Philip of Macedon.

Henry Ward Beecher: The Liverpool Address
October 16, 1863

For more than twenty-five years I have been made perfectly familiar with popular assemblies in all parts of my country except the extreme South. There has not, for the whole of that time, been a single day of my life when it would have been safe for me to go south of Mason and Dixon's line in my own country, and all for one reason: my solemn, earnest, persistent testimony against that which I consider to be the most atrocious thing under the sun—the system of African slavery in a great free republic. I have passed through that early period when right of free speech was denied to me. Again and again I have attempted to address audiences that, for no other crime than that of free speech, visited me with all manner of contumelious epithets; and, now, since I have been in England, although I have met with greater kindness and courtesy on the part of most than I deserved, yet, on the other hand, I perceive that the Southern influence prevails to some extent in England. It is my old acquaintance; I understand it perfectly, and I have always held it to be an unfailing truth that, where a man had a cause that would bear examination, he was perfectly willing to have it spoken about. And

when in Manchester I saw those huge placards: "Who is Henry Ward Beecher?"—and when in Liverpool I was told that there were those blood-red placards, purporting to say what Henry Ward Beecher had said, and calling upon Englishmen to suppress free speech—I tell you what I thought. I thought simply this: "I am glad of it." Why? Because, if they had felt perfectly secure, that *you* are the minions of the South and the slaves of slavery, they would have been perfectly still. And, therefore, when I saw so much nervous apprehension that, if I were permitted to speak—when I found they were afraid to have me speak—when I found that they considered my speaking damaging to their cause—when I found that they appealed from facts and reasonings to mob law—I said, no man need tell me what the heart and secret counsel of these men are. They tremble and are afraid.

Now, personally, it is a matter of very little consequence to me whether I speak here to-night or not. But one thing is very certain, if you do permit me to speak here to-night, you will hear very plain talking. You will not find a man—you will not find me to be a man that dared to speak about Great Britain 3,000 miles off, and then is afraid to speak to Great Britain when he stands on her shores. And if I do not mistake the tone and temper of Englishmen, they had rather have a man who opposes them in a manly way than a sneak that agrees with them in an unmanly way. Now, if I can carry you with me by sound convictions, I shall be immensely glad; but if I cannot carry you with me by facts and sound arguments, I do not wish you to go with me at all; and all that I ask is simply FAIR PLAY.

What will be the result if this present struggle shall eventuate in the separation of America, and making the South a slave territory exclusively and the North a free territory—what will

be the final result? You will lay the foundation for carrying the slave population clear through to the Pacific Ocean. This is the first step. There is not a man that has been a leader of the South at any time within these twenty years, that has not had this for a plan. It was for this that Texas was invaded, first by colonists, next by marauders, until it was wrested from Mexico. It was for this that they engaged in the Mexican War itself, by which the vast territory reaching to the Pacific was added to the Union. Never for a moment have they given up the plan of spreading the American institutions, as they call them, straight through toward the West, until the slave, who has washed his feet in the Atlantic, shall be carried to wash them in the Pacific. There! I have got that statement out, and you cannot put it back.

Now, let us consider the prospect. If the South becomes a slave empire, what relation will it have to you as a customer? It would be an empire of twelve millions of people. Now, of these, eight million are white, and four million black. Consider that one third of the whole are the miserably poor, unbuying blacks. You do not manufacture much for them. You have not got machinery coarse enough. Your labor is too skilled by far to manufacture bagging and linsey-woolsey. One other third consists of a poor, unskilled, degraded white, population; and the remaining one third, which is a large allowance, we will say, intelligent and rich.

Now here are twelve millions of people, and only one third of them are customers that can afford to buy the kind of goods that you bring to market. —My friends, I saw a man once, who was a little late at a railway station, chase an express train. He did not catch it. If you are going to stop this meeting, you have got to stop it before I speak; for after I have got things out, you may chase as long as you please;

you would not catch them. —But there is luck in leisure; I'm going to take it easy. —Two thirds of the population of the Southern States to-day are non-purchasers of English goods.

Now you must recollect another fact—namely, that this is going on, clear through to the Pacific Ocean; and if, by sympathy you help establish a slave empire, you *sagacious* Britons —if you like it better then, I will take the adjective out— are busy in favoring the establishment of an empire from ocean to ocean that should have the fewest customers and the largest non-buying population.

Now what can England make for the poor white population? What carpets, what linens, what cottons can you sell them? What machines, what looking-glasses, what combs, what leather, what books, what pictures, what engravings? —You may sell ships to a few, but what ships can you sell to two-thirds of the population of poor whites and blacks? A little bagging and a little linsey-woolsey, a few whips and manacles, are all that you can sell for the slave. This very day, in the slave States of America, there are eight millions out of twelve millions that are not, and cannot be, your customers from the very laws of trade.

But I know that you say, you cannot help sympathizing with a gallant people. They are the weaker people, the minority; and you cannot help going with the minority who are struggling for their rights against the majority. Nothing could be more generous, when a weak party stands for its own legitimate rights against imperious pride and power, than to sympathize with the weak. But whoever sympathized with a weak thief, because three constables had got hold of him? And yet the one thief in three policemen's hands is the weaker party. I suppose you would sympathize with him. Why, when that infamous king of Naples—Bomba, was driven into Gaeta

by Garibaldi with his immortal band of patriots, and Cavour sent against him the army of Northern Italy, who was the weaker party then? The tyrant and his minions; and the majority was with the noble Italian patriots, struggling for liberty. I never heard that Old England sent deputations to King Bomba, and yet his troops resisted bravely there. To-day, the majority of the people of Rome is with Italy. Nothing but French bayonets keeps her from going back to the kingdom of Italy, to which she belongs. Do you sympathize with the majority in Rome or the majority in Italy? To-day, the South is the minority in America, and they are fighting for *independence!* For what? I could wish so much bravery had a better cause, and that so much self-denial had been less deluded; that the poisonous and venomous doctrine of State rights might have been kept aloof; that so many gallant spirits, such as Jackson, might still have lived.

The force of these facts, historical and incontrovertible, cannot be broken, except by diverting attention by an attack upon the North. It is said that the North is fighting for Union, and not for emancipation. The North is fighting for Union, for that ensures emancipation. A great many men say to ministers of the Gospel: "You pretend to be preaching and working for the love of the people. Why, you are all the time preaching for the sake of the Church." What does the minister say? "It is by means of the Church that we help the people," and when men say that we are fighting for the Union, I too say we are fighting for the Union. But the motive determines the value; and why are we fighting for the Union? Because we shall never forget the testimony of our enemies. They have gone off declaring that the Union in the hands of the North was fatal to slavery. There is testimony in court for you.

No man can unveil the future; no man can tell what revolu-

tions are about to break upon the world; no man can tell what destiny belongs to France, nor to any of the European powers; but one thing is certain, that in the exigencies of the future there will be combinations and recombinations, and that those nations that are of the same faith, the same blood, and the same substantial interests, ought not to be alienated from each other, but ought to stand together. I do not say that you ought not to be in the most friendly alliance with France or with Germany; but I do say that your own children, the offspring of England, ought to be nearer to you than any people of strange tongue.

If there have been any feelings of bitterness in America, let me tell you that they have been excited, rightly or wrongly under the impression that Great Britain was going to intervene between us and our own lawful struggle. With the evidence that there is no such intention, all bitter feelings will pass away. We do not agree with the recent doctrine of neutrality as a question of law. But it is past, and we are not disposed to raise that question. We accept it now as a fact, and we say that the utterance of Lord Russell at Blairgowrie, together with the declaration of the government in stopping war-steamers here, has gone far toward quieting every fear and removing every apprehension from our minds.

And now in the future it is the work of every good man and patriot not to create divisions, but to do the things that will make for peace. On our part, it shall be done. On your part, it ought to be done; and when in any of the convulsions that come upon the world, Great Britain finds herself struggling single-handed against the gigantic powers that spread oppression and darkness, there ought to be such cordiality that she can turn and say to her first-born and most illustrious child, "Come!" I will not say that England cannot again, as hitherto,

single-handed manage any power, but I will say that England and America together for religion and liberty are a match for the world.

Now, gentlemen and ladies, when I came, I was asked whether I would answer questions, and I very readily consented to do so, as I had in other places; but, I will tell you, it was because I expected to have the opportunity of speaking with some sort of ease and quiet. I have for an hour and a half spoken against a storm, and you yourselves are witnesses that, by the interruption, I have been obliged to strive with my voice, so that I no longer have the power to control this assembly. And although I am in spirit perfectly willing to answer any question, and more than glad of the chance, yet I am, by this very unnecessary opposition to-night, incapacitated physically from doing it. Ladies and gentlemen, I bid you good-evening.

Historical Setting of Beecher's Memorial Sermon on Abraham Lincoln

One of the grandest themes for one of the grandest sermons ever delivered by Henry Ward Beecher from his pulpit in Plymouth Church was provided by the tragic assassination of President Lincoln on April 14, 1865, a day forever memorable in American history, as a day that combined the uttermost of joy and the uttermost of sorrow; for, on that day, the nation celebrated the fourth anniversary of the fall of Fort Sumter with thanksgiving at the prospect of an early peace; yet, on that day, the nation was robbed of its most heroic leader since Washington, the saintly Lincoln, who had led his people, like Moses, patiently and manfully, through four horrible years of bloody strife for an ideal that then, and only then, was about to be achieved.

On that day, the President had been wearied with his many arduous duties in receiving official callers and in attending the session of his cabinet. He, therefore, sought the relaxation and diversion of the theater, attending, that evening, with a small party, the performance at Ford's Theater. He was late in arriving, and the play had begun when his party entered the President's box; but, immediately, the acting ceased, and the audience rose for a moment to cheer him. No other unusual incident occurred until ten in the evening, when suddenly the audience was startled by the report of a pistol, and by the sight of a man, booted and spurred, leaping from the President's box to the stage, and there, for a moment, standing with a dagger in his hand and shouting *"Sic Semper Tyrannis."* That man was the actor, John Wilkes Booth. He had fired the shot that had startled the audience. He had, through a desire for insane revenge, killed the one man who would have been the South's best friend. He had snuffed out in an instant the hope of the nation. Then, pausing to enjoy a momentary triumph, though his leg was broken in the fall to the stage, he managed to escape down the back-stairs, to leap upon a horse, and to gallop away in the darkness.

Such was the story of Lincoln's assassination—enhanced by the news of a simultaneous attack by assassins on Secretary Seward—as it came to the ears of Henry Ward Beecher; while in Charleston, South Carolina, he was absent from his pulpit, during one of the most momentous occasions of his long and eventful career.

Early in the spring of 1865, it became evident to all, that the Confederate cause was doomed. Sherman had made his famous march to the sea and was proceeding northward to join Grant, who was hammering his way toward Richmond and the final surrender of Lee at Appomattox. The city of

Charleston, South Carolina, had fallen, and it was the plan of Stanton, Secretary-of-War, to raise the American flag with fitting ceremonies over Fort Sumter on April 14, the fourth anniversary of the day when it had been hauled down at the beginning of the war.

Beecher was chosen to be the orator of the occasion; and, when the ship that bore him, with a numerous company, came into Charleston harbor, he first received from another ship the news of Lee's surrender, that had taken place on April 9. "The wild outcry," he said, "the strange caprices, and exultations of that moment, those who were present will never forget. We were far off from the scene of war; we saw no signs nor tokens; it was as if the heavens had imparted it to us; but, Oh! what gladness, what ecstacy there was in that news no one can know but those who had suffered as we had suffered."

On the 14th, Major-General Anderson raised over the broken walls of Sumter the same flag that had flown there four years before; and, then, after the roar of many military salutes from batteries all around, in the presence of a most distinguished gathering, augmented by three thousand emancipated slaves who were brought from the city, Beecher delivered an oration that was like no other address he ever gave. On the leaders of the Confederacy, he poured out all the vials of his wrath; yet, for the Southern people, he had only words of love and brotherhood; and, to President Lincoln, he offered solemn congratulations "that God had sustained his life under unparalleled burdens, and had permitted him to see that consummation for which he had toiled with such unselfish wisdom."

This greeting to the President, however, was doomed never to reach his ears; for, on the evening of that very day, he was

struck down by the bullet of an assassin. For three days Beecher was in total ignorance of what had happened; and then, while visiting points of interest about Charleston, he and his party received the tragic news. Such a shock as it produced can hardly be imagined. "The blow," said Beecher, "brought not a sharp pang. It was so terrible that at first it stunned sensibility. Citizens were like men awakened at midnight by an earthquake, and bewildered to find everything that they were accustomed to trust wavering and falling. They wandered in the streets as if groping after some impending dread, or undeveloped sorrow, or some one to tell them what ailed them. They met each other as if each would ask, 'Am I awake, or do I dream?' There was a piteous helplessness, and strong men bowed down and wept."

On that day, it seemed as if the brightest noontide had been converted into the blackest midnight darkness, and in the midst of the silence that followed the terrible news, Beecher said to his comrades: "It is time all good men were at home."

While Lincoln's funeral cortège was proceeding through all the principal cities of the East and North on the way to the martyr's final resting-place in Springfield, Illinois, Beecher went into his own pulpit at Plymouth Church on Sunday, April 23, and there delivered his sublime tribute to the dead.

What more eloquent words could he have spoken than when he said to his sorrowing congregation: "Four years ago, oh Illinois, we took from your midst an untried man and from among the people; we return him to you a mighty conqueror. Not thine any more, but the Nation's; not ours, but the World's. Give him place, oh ye prairies! In the midst of this great continent his dust shall rest, a sacred altar to myriads who shall make pilgrimage to that shrine to kindle anew their zeal and patriotism. Ye winds, that move over

the mighty places of the West, chant his requiem! Ye people, behold a martyr whose blood, as so many articulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty."

Among the many thousands of funeral sermons that were preached throughout the land in love and veneration for the martyred President, there was none that was more sincere, more simple, more touching, or more grand than this discourse of Beecher's, which seemed to come straight from his great bleeding heart, that throbbed for the nation in its universal and overwhelming grief.

Henry Ward Beecher: Memorial Sermon on Abraham Lincoln—April 23, 1865

There is no historic figure more noble than that of Moses, the Jewish law-giver. There is scarcely another event in history more touching than his death. He had borne the great burdens of state for forty years, shaped the Jews to a nation, filled out their civil and religious polity, administered their laws, guided their steps, or dwelt with them in all their journeyings in the wilderness; had mourned in their punishment, kept step with their march, and led them in wars, until the end of their labors drew nigh. The last stage was reached. Jordan only lay between them and the promised land.

From that silent summit, the hoary leader gazed to the north, to the south, to the west, with hungry eyes. The dim outlines rose up. The hazy recesses spoke of quiet valleys between the hills. With eager longing, with sad resignation, he looked upon the promised land. It was now to him a forbidden land. It was a moment's anguish. He forgot all his personal wants, and drank in the vision of his people's home. His work was done. There lay God's promise fulfilled.

Again a great leader of the people has passed through toil, sorrow, battle, and war, and come near to the promised land of peace, into which he might not pass over. Who shall recount our martyr's sufferings for this people? Since the November of 1860, his horizon has been black with storms. By day and by night he trod a way of danger and darkness. On his shoulders rested a government dearer to him than his own life. At its integrity millions of men were striking at home. Upon this government foreign eyes lowered. It stood like a lone island in a sea full of storms; and every tide and wave seemed eager to devour it. Upon thousands of hearts great sorrows and anxieties have rested, but not on one such, and in such measure, as upon that simple, truthful, noble soul, our faithful and sainted Lincoln. He wrestled ceaselessly, through four black and dreadful purgatorial years, wherein God was cleansing the sin of his people as by fire.

At last the watcher beheld the gray dawn for the country. The mountains began to give forth their forms from out the darkness; and the East came rushing toward us with arms full of joy for all our sorrows. Then it was for him to be glad exceedingly, that had sorrowed immeasurably. Peace could bring to no other heart such joy, such rest, such honor, such trust, such gratitude. But he looked upon it as Moses looked upon the promised land. Then the wail of a nation proclaimed that he had gone from among us. Not thine the sorrow, but ours, sainted soul.

Never did two such orbs of experience meet in one hemisphere, as the joy and the sorrow of the same week in this land. The joy was as sudden as if no man had expected it, and as entrancing as if it had fallen a sphere from heaven. In one hour it lay without a pulse, without a gleam, or breath. A sorrow came that swept through the land as huge storms sweep through the forest and field, rolling thunder along the

sky, dishevelling the flowers, daunting every singer in thicket or forest, and pouring blackness and darkness across the land and up the mountains. Did ever so many hearts, in so brief a time, touch two such boundless feelings? It was the uttermost of joy; it was the uttermost of sorrow—noon and midnight, without a space between.

The blow brought not a sharp pang. It was so terrible that at first it stunned sensibility. Citizens were like men awakened at midnight by an earthquake, and bewildered to find everything that they were accustomed to trust wavering and falling. The very earth was no longer solid. The first feeling was the least. Men waited to get straight to feel. They wandered in the streets as if groping after some impending dread, or undeveloped sorrow, or some one to tell them what ailed them. They met each other as if each would ask the other, "Am I awake or do I dream?" There was a piteous helplessness. Strong men bowed down and wept. Other and common griefs belonged to some one in chief: this belonged to all. It was each and every man's. Every virtuous household in the land felt as if its first-born were gone. Rear to his name monuments, found charitable institutions, and write his name above their lintels; but no monument will ever equal the universal, spontaneous, and sublime sorrow that in a moment swept down lines and parties, and covered up animosities, and in an hour brought a divided people into unity of grief and indivisible fellowship of anguish.

And now the martyr is moving in triumphal march, mightier than when alive. The nation rises up at every stage of his coming. Cities and states are his pall-bearers, and the cannon beats the hours with solemn progression. Dead, dead, dead, he yet speaketh! Is Washington dead? Is Hampden dead? Is David dead? Is any man that ever was fit to live dead? Disenthralled of flesh, and risen in the unobstructed

sphere where passion never comes, he begins his illimitable work. His life now is grafted upon the infinite, and will be fruitful as no earthly life can be. Pass on, thou that hast overcome! Your sorrows, oh people, are his peace! Your bells, and bands, and muffled drums, sound triumph in his ear. Wail and weep here; God makes it echo joy and triumph there. Pass on!

Four years ago, oh Illinois, we took from your midst an untried man, and from among the people. We return him to you a mighty conqueror. Not thine any more, but the Nation's; not ours, but the World's. Give him place, oh ye prairies! In the midst of this great continent his dust shall rest, a sacred treasure to myriads who shall pilgrim to that shrine to kindle anew their zeal and patriotism. Ye winds that move over the mighty places of the West, chant requiem! Ye people, behold a martyr whose blood, as so many articulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty!

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATORY OF HENRY WARD BEECHER—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Beecher: *Lectures to Young Men* (1841)—See Indianapolis edition (1844); New York edition (1850).
2. Beecher: *The National Flag* (1861)—See Beecher's *Patriotic Addresses* (1887) 289-303.
3. Beecher: *The Camp and Its Dangers* (1861)—See ibid. 304-321.
4. Beecher: *The Manchester Speech* (1863)—See ibid. 437-464.
5. Beecher: *The Glasgow Speech* (1863)—See ibid. 465-494.
6. Beecher: *The Liverpool Speech* (1863)—See ibid. 515-544; Johnston and Woodburn's *American Orations* (1896) IV, 93-122; Bryan's *World Famous Orations* (1906) X, 9-26.
7. Beecher: *The Fort Sumter Flag Raising* (1865)—See Patriotic Addresses 676-697; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) I, 352-370; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) X, 239-245.
8. Beecher: *Abraham Lincoln* (1865)—*Patriotic Addresses* 701-712.
9. Beecher: *Yale Lectures on Preaching* (1872)—See New York edition (1872).

Historical Backgrounds

See E. D. Adams's *Great Britain and the American Civil War;* Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Channing's *History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Foster's *Century of American Diplomacy;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Schouler's *History of U. S.;* Smith's *Political History of Slavery;* Wilson's *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Adams, Charles Francis—See biography by C. F. Adams, Jr.

Beecher, Henry Ward—See biographies by Lyman Abbott, Beecher and Scoville, Barrows, and Hibben; also biographical sketch by Howard in *Patriotic Addresses.*

Brooks, Phillips—See biographies by Dunbar, and Allen; also biographical sketch in Fulton and Trueblood's *British and American Eloquence.*

Lincoln, Abraham—See biographies by Nicolay and Hay, Morse, Arnold, Hapgood, Stephenson, Tarbell, Barton, Charnwood, Raymond, Herndon, Lamon, Britt, and Sandburg.

For Beecher and Brooks as pulpit orators, see Brastow's *Representative Modern Preachers* (1904); and Davis's *Principles of Preaching* (1924).

For Beecher as a Lyceum orator, see Pond's *Memories of the Lyceum* in Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VI, 899-904.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Beecher's *Liverpool Address*

I. What was the Mason and Dixon Line?

II. Who were: (1) Bomba; (2) Garibaldi; (3) Cavour; (4) Lord Russell?

III. When and where did "Stonewall" Jackson meet his death?

IV. What indirect reference is made: (1) to Bismarck; (2) to the *Alabama?*

V. What evidence is there that Great Britain intended to intervene in America?—See Elson, 664-667.

VI. What internal evidence is there that Beecher disagreed with Webster's theory about slavery in New Mexico as given in the *Seventh of March Speech?*—See Johnston and Woodburn's *Am. Orations,* II, 178-182—and was there any ground for such disagreement?—See Lodge's *Webster.*

VII. What evidence is there that Beecher was familiar with the method of refutation by *reductio ad absurdum?*

VIII. How were the issues of the Civil War confused by the doctrine of State rights?—See Stephenson's *Lincoln,* 150-153, 187; Elson's *Hist. of U. S.* 713-715.

On Beecher's Memorial Sermon on Abraham Lincoln

I. Why does Beecher call Moses the Jewish law-giver?—See two decalogues, in *Exodus,* 34:14-26, *Exodus,* 20:3-17, *Deuteronomy,* 5:7-21.

II. What does Beecher mean when he says Moses filled out the civil polity of the Jews?—See *Exodus,* 18:13-26.

III. What does Beecher mean when he says that Moses filled out the religious polity of the Jews?—See *Exodus,* 40:1-38.

IV. What were the wars in which Moses led the Jewish people?—See *Deuteronomy,* 2:26-37; 3:1-11.

V. What was the name of the mountain from which Moses looked over into the promised land?—and how much could Moses see from that mountain?—See *Deuteronomy,* 32:49; 34:1-3; also Bailey and Kent's *History of the Hebrew Commonwealth,* 47-58.

VI. How old was Moses when he died?—See *Deuteronomy,* 31:2; 34:7.

VII. What made Beecher think that Moses looked upon the promised land with hungry eyes and eager longing?—See *Deuteronomy,* 3:23-27.

VIII. What internal evidence is there that Beecher makes a composite picture of Lincoln's trials from the story of Jacob blended with that of Moses? See *Genesis,* 32: 24, 26, 30.

IX. What is the full significance of the expression that *cities and States are his pall-bearers, and that the cannon beats the hours of solemn progression?*—See Barton's *Lincoln,* II, 356-366.

X. What internal evidence is there that Beecher was familiar with: (1) Everett's *Eulogy of Adams and Jefferson;* (2) *Book of Hebrews,* 11:4?

XI. What specific proof is there: (1) that Washington still lives; (2) that Hampden still lives; (3) that David still lives?

XII. What oratorical device for stirring the emotions does Beecher borrow from Shakespeare's Mark Antony?—See *Julius Caesar,* Act III, Scene II.

Dictionary Studies From Henry Ward Beecher

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. again 2. apprehension 3. atrocious 4. bagging 5. catch 6. certain 7. constable 8. contumelious 9. courtesy 10. diverting 11. emancipation 12. epithets 13. eventuate 14. imperious 15. incontrovertible 16. leisure 17. linsey-woolsey 18. manacles 19. marauders 20. minions 21. purporting 22. sagacious 23. temper 24. tone 25. visited 26. wrested

1. across 2. articulate 3. daunt 4. dishevel 5. hoary 6. integrity 7. lintels 8. lowered 9. myriads 10. orbs 11. purgatorial 12. recesses 13. requiem 14. polity

CHAPTER XVI

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

Ingersoll's Place Among Political and Platform Orators

Robert G. Ingersoll was one of America's foremost political and platform orators for three decades, from 1876, when he made his famous "Plumed Knight" speech nominating Blaine for the presidency, down to 1896, when he took to the stump for the last time to oppose William J. Bryan in his presidential campaign on the free-silver issue.

These three decades were characterized by terrific biennial and quadrennial political battles between the Republican and Democratic parties; first, on the issue of enforcing against the South the provisions of the Fifteenth Amendment in regard to negro suffrage; then, on the question of civil service reform to break down the spoils system; and finally, on the question of providing cheap money to give relief to the agricultural West and South against the capitalistic North and East.

Strangely enough, however, the oratory of Ingersoll and of other Republican campaign orators throughout this period found its inspiration chiefly in events that occurred during the Civil War and in the decade of reconstruction that followed this great conflict.

In every respect, Ingersoll was a typical representative of the campaign orators of the so-called "Grand Old Party," who, during this period, "waved the bloody shirt," according to the phraseology of the day, to remind the Northern voters of the necessity for maintaining a solid North against the solid South, in order that the fruits of the war might not be lost.

In other respects, however, Ingersoll was unique among all American orators; for he was not merely a political partisan: he was also a great religious controversialist, an iconoclast with respect to all the traditional beliefs and practices of the church, and an outspoken opponent of orthodox Christian theology.

Ingersoll lived in that period of American history when religion and science first came into bitter conflict over the theory of evolution as propounded by Charles Darwin. This theory was set forth by Darwin in 1859, when he published his *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection;* and soon it created throughout the scientific, philosophical, and religious world, a tremendous upheaval in consequence of the approval given it by such intellectual leaders as Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley.

For this new thought, Ingersoll was a ready disciple because of his acquired prejudices against Calvinistic theology and in consequence of his association with liberal thinkers who admired the theology of Theodore Parker. He did not become a conspicuous protagonist of evolution, however, until after 1869, when Huxley gave to the world the term *agnostic,* which seemed to define exactly the position that Ingersoll should take on theological questions.

Throughout the decade of the seventies, when great fortunes were being amassed, when munificent donations were being made to found educational institutions, and when the question was being pressed whether these institutions of learning should permit instruction or research on the theory of evolution, Ingersoll threw himself violently into the fray, denouncing all opposition to free thought, upholding the teachings of science, and attacking fearlessly all the old doctrines of orthodox theology.

In so doing, he tells us that he was an apostle of Columbus, Magellan, Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler, Descartes, Newton, Laplace, Locke, Hume, Bacon, Shakespeare, Kant, Leibnitz, Goethe, Fulton, Watts, Volta, Galvani, Franklin, Morse, Humboldt, Crompton, Arkwright, Voltaire, Thomas Paine, Darwin, Haeckel, Büchner, Spencer, Tyndall, Huxley, Draper, Lecky, and Buckle.

All the older theology, he threw aside, and declared simply that he believed "happiness to be the only good, reason the only torch, justice the only worship, humanity the only religion, and love the only priest."

Such iconoclastic doctrines could not be preached, however, without arousing tremendous opposition. All the orthodox preachers condemned him. Henry Ward Beecher alone seemed mildly friendly to him; and he showed his sympathy, not by condoning Ingersoll's attacks on Christianity, but by trying rather to reconcile science and the old religion. Other great preachers, like Phillips Brooks, referred to him as a "blatant infidel"; and Dwight L. Moody started out to combat his heresies by a widespread revival movement to maintain, or re-establish, the old faith.

Strange it was that a man so universally condemned by the overwhelming mass of conservative thinkers should have risen to any prominence, or should have wielded any influence whatsoever in the field of politics, where conformity to general ideals is usually a necessity. But in the case of Ingersoll, his unparalleled eloquence broke down all barriers of religious prejudice that were raised against him. He could not be elected to any high political office; but he was requisitioned, nevertheless, on all occasions, to use his golden eloquence to support the aspirations of others for these high places.

Ingersoll became an orator of national prominence in the

campaign of 1876, when he felt an urgent necessity to inform the people of the glorious services of the Republican party from the date of its origin, and to warn the people of the dangers threatening the Republic if the Democratic party—the party of the old Southern slaveholders—was given control of the government.

To understand the political oratory of Ingersoll, therefore, it is essential that we understand the events of the Civil War period and the period of reconstruction as he viewed them and as they were regarded by his political opponents.

From the year 1854 to the year 1861, Ingersoll was a Douglas-Democrat; but, after the firing upon Fort Sumter, he became one of the staunchest of life-long Republicans. He saw active service in the Union army; was captured and paroled; but, failing to be exchanged, secured an honorable dismissal in 1863, just in time to see and appreciate the nefarious work of disloyal Northern Democrats, who organized under such names as "Sons of Liberty," "Knights of the Golden Circle," and "Order of the Star," to impede the operation of the Federal draft law, to release Confederate prisoners from Northern military prisons, to conduct raids from the Canadian border, to defeat the re-election of Lincoln, and in every way to break down the Northern morale.

Ingersoll, therefore, hated the Southern Democrats, because they had been slaveholders, secessionists, and enemies in arms; but he hated the Northern Democrats even more, because they sympathized with slavery, approved secession, and aided and abetted the rebellion.

He could never forget his old war-hatred. He suspected the South of intending to reinstate slavery when local self-government was restored, and hence he thoroughly approved the carpet-bag regime, supported by Federal bayonets until the

negroes were prepared to maintain their civil rights. He also approved the long delay in extending amnesty to the old Confederate leaders; and he violently opposed all efforts to postpone indefinitely the payment of the bonded indebtedness of the Federal government incurred in support of the Northern cause, as well as all efforts to provide a cheap currency through bi-metalism, which would favor the South and West, and defraud the North and East.

As Ingersoll upheld the old cause of the North, however, which was represented by the Republican party, he found that he was compelled to defend a political machine that was honeycombed with corruption. He found that he was compelled again and again to meet the onslaughts of the Southern, and the Northern, Democrats, and of the Liberal Republican faction, which wanted to restore brotherly love between the sections, rid the government of its corruption, establish civil service reform, and aid the agricultural communities by breaking down the high protective tariff.

While Ingersoll was establishing a splendid reputation as a Republican campaign orator, he was surrounded by a great coterie of famous "Old Guard" spokesmen, such as James G. Blaine, Roscoe Conkling, Oliver P. Morton, James A. Garfield, Chauncey Depew, and Horace Porter. At the same time, he was confronted, across the barrier between North and South, by powerful Southern Democrats whose eloquence reached its greatest heights in Lucius Q. C. Lamar of Mississippi, and in Benjamin H. Hill and Henry W. Grady of Georgia, who later were superseded by the silver-tongued orator of the West, William J. Bryan.

But Ingersoll and his associates were compelled to meet not only the opposition of Democrats as campaign orators: they were also compelled to meet the opposition of insurgent Re-

publicans,—sometimes called the Liberal Republicans,—and, in the campaign of 1884, called the Mugwumps,—such as Carl Schurz, George William Curtis, and Henry Ward Beecher.

Among all these orators, Ingersoll was acknowledged to have no superior. As a religious controversialist, he had no equal; and, though diametrically opposed to pulpit orators like Moody and Phillips Brooks, and differing widely from Henry Ward Beecher, he will always be regarded as one of the great leaders of the religious agitation of the last half of the nineteenth century. As a convention orator, he will be placed side by side with, and perhaps above, his great contemporaries, Roscoe Conkling, James A. Garfield, and William Jennings Bryan. As a commemorative orator at reunions of the Grand Army of the Republic, he stands beside, or above, Horace Porter, the associate of Grant; and he will be compared on equal terms with Henry W. Grady of the South, who most gloriously depicted the sufferings of Southern veterans. And finally, as a Lyceum platform orator, he can be compared only with his most famous rival, Henry Ward Beecher.

Always moving in the company of great orators, Robert G. Ingersoll acquired no little distinction, therefore, when he won the reputation of being one of America's foremost political and platform speakers during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The Life of Robert G. Ingersoll

Robert G. Ingersoll, the Great Agnostic, and so-called atheist and infidel, was the best hated and most beloved popular orator of his times for three decades following the Civil War; and he has been designated by no less an authority than Henry Ward Beecher as "the most brilliant speaker of the English tongue of all men upon this globe." Not only as a

platform orator on the Lyceum circuit, but also as a political orator, stump speaker, and jury-pleader, this much maligned man rose to distinction such as no other man enjoyed—an iconoclast to the very end, yet a bewitching master of rhetoric, a prose-poet in the field of oratory whose equal had not been known since the time of Hugh Brackenridge[1] of Revolutionary fame, and for whom there has been no parallel in later days except in the instance of Henry W. Grady, the most beloved of modern orators from the South.

The son of a Congregational minister, Robert G. Ingersoll was born at Dresden, New York, in 1833. He was but three years old when he lost the guiding influence of his mother, whom he always remembered tenderly as she lay cold and beautiful and serene in her coffin. To his father, Robert was always a problem because of his boyish spirits, which the harsh disciplinarian sought to subdue by many thrashings. If Robert walked out of a church service, because the preacher waxed too eloquent in describing the tortures of Hell, then he was thrashed; and, if, with less justification, he cut the bell-rope of the church, or smoked out a prayer-meeting by putting a board over the top of the church chimney, then he was also thrashed.

It was said to have been these periodic thrashings that led him early to turn against the type of religion that his father preached; but another circumstance also contributed to this end. In several respects, his father was more liberal than his fellow-ministers, and more liberal than the people of his congregations, though, in no sense, could he be accused of throwing off any of the fundamental doctrines of Calvinism; but, for the trifling ideas of liberalism that he expressed, he was continually being asked to move on from one parish to another.

[1] See Moore's *American Eloquence.*

As a result of such experiences, Robert gradually caught fire with a deep sense of injustice done by the church to his father; and, in his boyish mind, there seethed up a hot rebellion against what he considered to be a persistent and relentless religious persecution.

Almost never was his father able to retain a parish for more than two years; and, hence, Robert's boyhood and youth were spent in many different towns in a wide range of States including New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Illinois. At eighteen years of age, Robert had become a district school teacher in Illinois; and, three years later, in 1854, with his elder brother Ebon, he hung out his shingle as a lawyer in Shawneetown, a small trading community of Illinois. Three years of successful practice here were followed by his removal up the Illinois river to Peoria, where, almost instantly, he won a brilliant reputation as a lawyer and political stump-speaker.

Ingersoll was only twenty-seven years of age, and had been a resident of Peoria for only three years, when he was selected as the Democratic candidate for Congress from the Peoria district. This occurred in the year 1860, when Illinois was stirred to its depths by the great struggle between its two sons, Lincoln and Douglas, for the presidency. Ingersoll was a Douglas-Democrat; and, throughout his district, which was strongly Republican, he put up a splendid fight against gigantic odds, only to go down in defeat with his party after enhancing his reputation as an orator by his independent course in condemning slavery and the *Fugitive Slave Law,* while he upheld Douglas's theory of popular sovereignty as the only means of keeping slavery out of the Territories.

The speeches that Ingersoll delivered in this campaign were the last that he ever made as a stump-speaker for the Democratic party. As soon as Fort Sumter was fired upon in the following spring, Ingersoll renounced his affiliation with the

Democrats and henceforth was a Republican, more prominent perhaps than any other single speaker for that party throughout three decades.

As Clark E. Carr says in his story of *The Illini,* "no man can estimate the power and influence of Ingersoll in arousing the American people to a sense of their solemn responsibilities when the war came upon them, or in awakening them to a sense of justice and a proper appreciation of the rights of men. One must have heard him before a great audience in the open air, as we in Illinois so often did, to appreciate his great power. Every emotion of his soul, every pulsation of his heart, was for his country and for liberty; and no other man has ever been able, in so high a degree, to inspire others with the sentiments that animated him. No just history of Illinois can be written without placing high upon the scroll of fame the name of Robert G. Ingersoll."

An energetic spirit such as his could not be idle while others were offering their lives for patriotism; and, accordingly, in 1861, he organized a regiment of cavalry, of which he became the colonel, to see service at the front. He took part in two important battles; and, then, while engaged in scouting, he was captured by a force of Confederate cavalry under General N. B. Forrest at Lexington, Tennessee. He was soon paroled; but, after waiting impatiently for six months to be exchanged, he despaired of entering again into active service, and, therefore, resigned to take up the practice of law.

From 1867 to 1869, he was Attorney-General of Illinois; and, in 1868, he refused the proffered nomination of the Republican party for the governorship of his State, because he could not comply with the request of party leaders to recant his views in opposition to the conventional beliefs of orthodox Christians.

Ever since his marriage, in 1858, to Eva Parker, a distant

relative and ardent disciple of Theodore Parker, he had become more and more an outspoken controversialist on religious matters; and, in the early seventies, he began his long-continued assaults on what he termed superstition, by lectures given throughout the country for the highest fees paid by Lyceum managements, on such anti-theological subjects as *The Gods; Individuality; Heretics and Heresies; The Ghosts; Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child; What We Must Do to be Saved; Some Mistakes of Moses; Some Reasons Why; Orthodoxy;* and *Myth and Miracle;* which alternated with other lectures on *Humboldt, Thomas Paine,* and *Shakespeare.*

Ingersoll could hardly be regarded as a national figure, however, until he gave his famous *Plumed Knight Speech* before the Republican National Convention, at Cincinnati, Ohio, in the year 1876, when he nominated James G. Blaine for the presidency. By this one speech, he was elevated to the position of being one of the nation's greatest political orators.

Henceforth, Ingersoll was in demand everywhere as an advocate before the bar, as a platform lecturer, as a stump-speaker, and as a commemorative orator at reunions of the Grand Army of the Republic.

He soon removed to Washington, and thence to New York, where he became conspicuous as an orator at the bar in his defense of the famous *Star Route* conspirators, charged with defrauding the Federal government on mail contracts of some millions of dollars. This case dragged its weary length through the courts from 1878 to 1883.

Though almost constantly in the public eye as an orator, Ingersoll will be remembered chiefly for four great speeches; namely, his *Speech Nominating Blaine* in 1876; his platform lecture on *Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child* in 1877; his funeral address *At His Brother's Grave* in 1879; and his *Decoration Day Oration* in 1888.

In these speeches, he proved himself to be an almost incomparable master of the English tongue, capable of touching the deepest emotions to which the human heart is susceptible. Even his enemies were thrilled by his overpowering personality, his wit, his pathos, his imagination, his courage, his love and tenderness, and, through it all, his ever recurring hope for better things.

No man, however much he hated Ingersoll for his attacks upon Christianity, could fail to relent in that hatred by reading, or hearing, his sublime utterance, unexcelled in the realms of eloquence, or in the realms of literature, contained in his address, *At His Brother's Grave.*

When at last, after thirty years of storming the ancient citadels of Christianity, this Great Agnostic himself had faced the grim Reaper at the age of sixty-six, it was but fitting that, at his burial service, there should be read his own words taken from the funeral discourse for his brother, long since gone:

"From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.

"He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his last breath, 'I am better now.' Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas, and tears and fears, that these dear words are true of all the countless dead."

We may not care to go as far as some of Ingersoll's disciples; but, at least, we cannot fail to feel the pulse of admiration when we read such praise as this bestowed by one of them upon him.—He was, says this admirer, "the greatest genius of the western world, an immense personality—unique, lovable, sublime; a master orator of the English tongue—a peerless artist of the noblest art—and as true a poet as Nature ever held in tender clasp upon her loving breast. In words

coined for the chosen few, he told of the joys and sorrows, hopes, dreams, and fears of universal life—a philanthropist more generous than the tropic clime—of self as thoughtless in the face of want as night is lavish with the dew. And withal a great reformer—perfectly poised, absolutely honest, and as fearless as right itself—the most aggressive and most formidable enemy of all superstition. Such a man was that most hated, and most loved, of modern American orators, the Great Agnostic, Robert G. Ingersoll."

Historical Setting of Ingersoll's Nomination of Blaine

The speech by Robert G. Ingersoll nominating Blaine for the presidency in the Republican National Convention, at Cincinnati, on June 15, 1876, is universally recognized as the most eloquent speech of its kind ever heard in America. Two other nominating speeches of about the same period are sometimes compared with it: namely, the speech of Roscoe Conkling in 1880 nominating Grant for a third term, and the speech by James A. Garfield in the same year nominating John Sherman of Ohio; but neither of these speeches can measure up to the dazzling beauty and overpowering grandeur of Ingersoll's mighty effort at Cincinnati in behalf of the candidacy of James G. Blaine.

This speech was delivered as the prelude to one of the most bitter contests ever waged for the Republican nomination; for, in that year, the Republican party faced one of the great crises of its history, on account of recent scandals in Grant's second administration, and on account of the constantly growing Democratic vote that had captured the lower House of Congress in the last election.

With President Grant definitely out of the race, it was

necessary for the party to make a wise choice from a large field of ambitious candidates, the most conspicuous of whom were James G. Blaine, former Speaker of the House, and now minority leader of the Republicans on the floor; Roscoe Conkling of New York, and O. P. Morton of Indiana, both Senators and favorites of the administration; Benjamin H. Bristow of Kentucky, the reform candidate, who, as Grant's Secretary-of-the-Treasury had prosecuted the gigantic "whiskey frauds"; and Rutherford B. Hayes, a "dark horse" who had recently been elected on a sound-money platform as governor of Ohio.

Among all these candidates, Blaine appeared at first to be the most likely choice of the convention; for he had almost as many delegates pledged to him as had all the others combined, and he had the prestige of being the most eminent Republican leader in Congress during the last eight years, but, in spite of these advantages, he had several almost fatal weaknesses. He had incurred the undying hostility of Senator Conkling's faction in consequence of a personal feud existing since 1866, when he had called Conkling "a turkey-gobbler strut"; he had alienated the sympathy of Liberal Republicans by reawakening, in a recent virulent speech against extending amnesty to Jefferson Davis, all the fierce sectional hatred of the Civil War period; and he was not wholly free from suspicion of corruption in connection with financial scandals arising from the building of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad. To bolster up his prospects, however, he had back of him in Congress a most dramatic, recent vindication of his integrity; and, by his early campaign tactics, he had placed solidly behind him the great bulk of the old-soldier vote.

Against Blaine, all the other candidates were willing to combine, but no one of them seemed to have any large following on the eve of the convention, except Benjamin H. Bristow,

who, being from Kentucky and having served in the Union army, was considered as most likely to capture both the Southern and the Northern vote, while his recent prosecution of government frauds was thought sufficient to hold the vote of all reformers.

Thus, when nominations were first called for, it was a case of Blaine against the field, and the most prominent of his opponents was Benjamin H. Bristow of Kentucky.

On the second day of the convention, Richard H. Dana, representing the State of Massachusetts, rose to second the nomination of Bristow, and in a stirring speech said: "I tell you, gentlemen of the convention, I know of no other name which is sure to carry the old Commonwealth of Massachusetts next November. . . . . Massachusetts is satisfied with the loyalty of Benjamin H. Bristow."

As Dana sat down, Robert G. Ingersoll, then unknown to the country-at-large, came forward from the rear of the hall to present on behalf of Illinois the name of James G. Blaine. "Massachusetts," he said, "may be satisfied with the loyalty of Benjamin H. Bristow. So am I. But if any man nominated by this convention cannot carry the State of Massachusetts, I am not satisfied with the loyalty of that State. If the nominee of this convention cannot carry the grand old Commonwealth of Massachusetts by 75,000 majority, I would advise them to sell out Faneuil Hall as a Democratic headquarters. I would advise them to take from Bunker Hill their old monument of glory."

With this first statement, Ingersoll had turned the tables upon Bristow and had called forth tumultuous applause for himself and his unannounced candidate. Then proceeding to enumerate in detail, and with the most fascinating and poetic word-pictures, the qualifications demanded by the Republicans

for their candidate, he at last placed in nomination that man "whose political reputation was as spotless as a star,"—that man, "who had torn from the throat of treason the tongue of slander, and had snatched the mask of Democracy from the hideous face of rebellion"—that man, who, "like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lances full and fair against the brazen foreheads of every defamer of his country and maligner of its honor."

"In the name of the great Republic, in the name of all her soldiers living and dead, in the name of those who perished in the skeleton clutches of famine at Andersonville and Libby, whose sufferings he so eloquently remembers, Illinois nominates for the next President," said Ingersoll, "that prince of parliamentarians, that leader of leaders,—James G. Blaine."

The burst of applause that followed this eloquent appeal was said never to have been equaled up to this time in the history of political conventions. If the balloting could have followed immediately, all historians agree that the choice would have fallen to Blaine; but, as it was, other nomination speeches followed; and, at 5:15 in the afternoon, to prevent the choice of a candidate while the spell of Ingersoll's oratory was fresh, the convention adjourned to the next day.

Even then it appeared that Blaine had 285 votes as against 124 for his nearest competitor on the first ballot. Seven ballots in all were taken, with a gradual drift to Hayes, as a "dark horse," and at last the vote stood Hayes 384, Blaine 351, and Bristow 21.

Though Hayes received the nomination, this fact, in no way, belittles the achievement of Ingersoll as a convention orator. The day before, he had set the convention into a perfect blaze by his transcendent eloquence. Up to this time,

he had been unknown to the country at large, but overnight he had acquired undying fame as the most brilliant political orator of his day and generation. From the vivid word-painting of Ingersoll on this occasion, James G. Blaine was henceforth to be called the "Plumed Knight" in American politics; but as Elson, the historian, has said, the eloquence of Ingersoll made him, Ingersoll, "scarcely less famous than the one for whom he spoke."

Robert G. Ingersoll: Nomination of Blaine

June 15, 1876

Massachusetts may be satisfied with the loyalty of Benjamin H. Bristow. So am I. But if any man nominated by this convention cannot carry the State of Massachusetts, I am not satisfied with the loyalty of that State. If the nominee of this convention cannot carry the grand old Commonwealth of Masaschusetts by seventy-five thousand majority, I would advise them to sell out Faneuil Hall as a Democratic headquarters. I would advise them to take from Bunker Hill that old monument of glory.

The Republicans of the United States demand as their leader in the great contest of 1876 a man of intellect, a man of integrity, a man of well-known and approved political opinion. They demand a statesman. They demand a reformer after, as well as before, the election. They demand a politician in the highest and broadest sense of that word. They demand a man acquainted with public affairs—with the wants of the people—with not only the requirements of the hour but with the demands of the future.

They demand a man broad enough to comprehend the relations of this government to the other nations of the earth.

They demand a man well versed in the powers, duties, and prerogatives of each and every department of this government.

They demand a man who will sacredly preserve the financial honor of the United States—one who knows enough to know that the national debt must be paid through the prosperity of this people. One who knows enough to know that all the financial theories in the world cannot redeem a single dollar. One who knows enough to know that all the money must be made, not by law, but by labor. One who knows enough to know that the people of the United States have the industry to make the money and the honor to pay it over just as fast as they make it.

The Republicans of the United States demand a man who knows that prosperity and resumption, when they come, must come together. When they come, they will come hand in hand through the golden harvest fields; hand in hand by the whirling spindle and the turning wheel; hand in hand past the open furnace doors; hand in hand by the flaming forges; hand in hand by the chimneys filled with eager fire by the hands of the countless sons of toil. This money has got to be dug out of the earth. You cannot make it by passing resolutions in a political meeting.

The Republicans of the United States want a man who knows that this government should protect every citizen at home and abroad; who knows that any government that will defend its defenders and will not protect its protectors is a disgrace to the map of the world. They demand a man who believes in the eternal separation and divorcement of church and school. They demand a man whose political reputation is spotless as a star; but they do not demand that their candidate shall have a certificate of moral character signed by a Confederate Congress. The man who has in full-heaped and

rounded measure all of these splendid qualifications is the present grand and gallant leader of the Republican party—James G. Blaine.

Our country crowned with the vast and marvelous achievements of its first century, asks for a man worthy of her past—prophetic of her future; asks for a man who has the audacity of genius; asks for a man who is the grandest combination of heart, conscience, and brains beneath the flag. That man is James G. Blaine.

For the Republican host led by that intrepid man there can be no such thing as defeat.

This is a grand year—a year filled with the recollections of the Revolution; filled with proud and tender memories of the sacred past; filled with the legends of liberty; a year in which the sons of freedom will drink from the fountain of enthusiasm; a year in which the people call for a man who has preserved in Congress what our soldiers won upon the field; a year in which we call for the man who has torn from the throat of treason the tongue of slander—a man who has snatched the mask of Democracy from the hideous face of rebellion—a man who, like an intellectual athlete, stood in the arena of debate, challenged all comers, and who, up to the present moment, is a total stranger to defeat.

Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lances full and fair against the brazen foreheads of every defamer of his country and maligner of its honor.

For the Republican party to desert a gallant man now is worse than if an army should desert their general upon the field of battle.

James G. Blaine is now, and has been for years, the bearer

of the sacred standard of the Republic. I call it sacred because no human being can stand beneath its folds without becoming and without remaining free.

Gentlemen of the Convention, in the name of the great Republic, the only republic that ever existed upon this earth; in the name of all her defenders and of all her supporters; in the name of all her soldiers living; in the name of all her soldiers who died upon the field of battle; and in the name of those who perished in the skeleton clutch of famine at Andersonville and Libby, whose sufferings he so eloquently remembers, Illinois nominates for the next President of this country that prince of parliamentarians, that leader of leaders —James G. Blaine.

Historical Setting of Ingersoll's Lecture, on Liberty of Man, Woman and Child

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the great early leaders in the cause of woman suffrage, once said, while speaking of Robert Ingersoll, that she had "heard the greatest orators of the nineteenth century in England and America; O'Connell in his palmiest days on the Home Rule question; Gladstone and John Bright in the House of Commons; Spurgeon, James, and Stopford Brooke, in their respective pulpits; our own Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, and Webster and Clay, on great occasions; the stirring eloquence of our anti-slavery orators, both in Congress and on the platform, but none of them ever equaled Robert Ingersoll in his highest flights."

Now if we inquire what prompted this outburst of extravagant praise, we find our answer in the fact that Mrs. Stanton heard Ingersoll the first time he delivered his famous lecture

on *Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child,* as he gave it before a wildly enthusiastic audience in Chicago in the year 1877.

This lecture is justly regarded as his first really great utterance on the lecture platform, arising directly from his own bitter experiences in the pursuit of personal liberty, and heralding the long period of twenty years when he was to be recognized as the most popular of American lecturers, who, according to one of his biographers, received more money for his platform eloquence than any twenty of America's other great lecturers combined, including even Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, and John B. Gough.

The theme of this discourse was that every man and every woman should make "an individual declaration of independence"; that mankind everywhere should free itself from intellectual servitude to the past; that man should be freed from persecution for his religious beliefs; that woman should be assigned a place of complete equality with man; that the child should be dealt with through reason; and that love; not fame, nor riches, nor power, should be the guide of all human conduct and the goal of all human happiness.

These were the thoughts with which Ingersoll shocked and charmed his listeners in the lecture on *Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child;* but only a reading of the lecture itself will reveal how completely they reflected his own revolt at the way in which he had been reared; how completely he had overturned the old philosophy of woman's inferiority in his own delightful companionships at home with wife and children; how he himself had been persecuted; how his highest ambitions for fame and honor in the political field had been blasted on account of his religious views; how he sympathized with all past martyrs accused of heresy; how he had determined to follow and proclaim the views of "Tom" Paine and Voltaire,

of Benjamin Franklin, Copernicus, Humboldt, and Darwin; and how, despite persecution, he would voice for others what they dared not voice for themselves.

"I have made up my mind," said he in this lecture, "to say my say. I shall do it kindly, distinctly; but I am going to do it. I know there are thousands of men who substantially agree with me, but who are not in a condition to express their thoughts. They are poor; they are in business; and they know that, should they tell their honest thought, persons will refuse to patronize them—to trade with them; they wish to get bread for their little children; they wish to take care of their wives; they wish to have homes and the comforts of life. Every such person is a certificate of the meanness of the community in which he resides. And yet I do not blame these people for not expressing their thought. I say to them: 'Keep your ideas to yourselves; feed and clothe the ones you love. I will do your talking for you. The church cannot touch, cannot crush, cannot starve, cannot stop or stay me; I will express my thoughts."

And, accordingly, with the utmost vigor, the utmost boldness, and even the utmost audacity, he did express his thoughts to shocked and delighted audiences throughout the country. But, perhaps, nowhere did he achieve a greater triumph than in Chicago on his first appearance with this lecture, which Elizabeth Cady Stanton has described in this wise:

"I heard Mr. Ingersoll," she said, "many years ago in Chicago. The hall seated five thousand people; every inch of standing room was also occupied; aisles and platform were crowded to overflowing. He held that vast audience for three hours so completely entranced that, when he left the platform, no one moved, until suddenly, with loud cheers and applause, they recalled him. He returned smiling, and said: 'I'm glad

you called me back, as I have something more to say. Can you stand another half-hour?' 'Yes, an hour, two hours, all night,' was shouted from various parts of the house; and he talked on until midnight, with unabated vigor, to the delight of his audience. This was the greatest triumph of oratory I have ever witnessed, and it was the first time he delivered his matchless lecture, *The Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child.*"

After speaking in Chicago, Ingersoll repeated this lecture in July of the same year at the Grand Opera House in San Francisco, and gave the large proceeds from it to local charities. The clergy of that city, as might be expected, were greatly disturbed by his appearance; and, eager to find some vulnerable point from which to attack him in their pulpits, they telegraphed to a religious worker in Peoria to furnish them with any available information reflecting upon Ingersoll's personal character. Much to their surprise, the reply came, that, aside from his anti-theological views, there was no such information. But they made the attack just the same; and Byron-like, Ingersoll retorted in one of his ablest lectures entitled *My Reviewers Reviewed.*

So much bitter controversy has raged over Ingersoll that it may be difficult to appraise this lecture without prejudice. It may be extravagant to say with one of his biographers that it "is a sermon fit for the Cathedral of the Universe"; but it never can be regarded as extravagant to say of part of this lecture, his soliloquy at the grave of Napoleon, that it is one of the most beautiful prose-poems in the English language. And, when we think too harshly of Ingersoll, or of this lecture let us remember that, in it, is another prose-poem, never excelled even in the works of the great Southern orator, Henry W. Grady, and worthy almost of Milton, whose *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* it suggests.

"The laugh of a child," said Ingersoll in this other prose-poem, "will make the holiest day more sacred still. Strike with hand of fire, O weird musician, thy harp strung with Apollo's golden hair; fill the vast cathedral aisles with symphonies sweet and dim, deft toucher of the organ keys; blow, bugle, blow, until thy silver notes do touch and kiss the moonlit waves, and charm the lovers wandering 'mid the vine-clad hills. But know your sweetest strains are discords all, compared with childhood's happy laugh—the laugh that fills the eyes with light and every heart with joy. O rippling river of laughter, thou art the blessed boundary line between the beasts and men; and every wayward wave of thine doth drown some fretful fiend of care. O Laughter, rose-lipped daughter of Joy, there are dimples enough in thy cheeks to catch and hold and glorify all the tears of grief."

Such passages as this, found interspersed throughout the works of Ingersoll, have made his eloquence immortal, have made it rise above the subtleties and quick retorts of controversy, and have led both friends and foes to place him among the most gifted speakers of all times who have used the English tongue.

Robert G. Ingersoll: Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child

1877

Do not tell me that you have got to be rich in order to be happy. We have a false standard of these things in the United States. We think that a man must be great, that he must be famous, that he must be wealthy. That is all a mistake. It is not necessary to be rich, to be great, to be famous, to be powerful, in order to be happy. The happy man is the free

man. Happiness is the legal tender of the soul. Joy is wealth. Liberty is joy.

A little while ago I stood by the grave of the old Napoleon. It is a magnificent sepulcher of gilt and gold, fit almost for a dead deity. I gazed upon the sarcophagus of rare and nameless marble in which rest at last the ashes of the restless man. I leaned upon the balustrade and thought of all the career of the greatest soldier of the modern world. I saw him upon the banks of the Seine contemplating suicide. I saw him quelling the mob in the streets of Paris. I saw him at the head of the army of Italy. I saw him crossing the bridge of Lodi with the tri-color in his hand. I saw him in Egypt in the shadows of the pyramids. I saw him conquer the Alps and mingle the eagles of France with the eagles of the crags. I saw him in Russia, where the infantry of the snows and the cavalry of the wild beasts scattered his legions like winter's withered leaves. I saw him at Leipsic in defeat and disaster, driven by a million bayonets, clutched like a beast, banished to Elba. I saw him escape and retake an empire by the magnificent force of his genius. I saw him upon the frightful field of Waterloo, where Chance and Fate combined to wreck the fortunes of their former king, and I saw him a prisoner on the rock at St. Helena, with his arms calmly folded behind his back gazing steadfastly out upon the sad and solemn sea.

And I thought of all the widows and orphans he had made; of all the tears that had been shed for his glory; of the only woman who had ever loved him torn from his heart by the ruthless hand of ambition. And I said, I would rather have been a poor French peasant and worn wooden shoes; I would rather have lived in a hut with the vines growing purple in the amorous kisses of the autumn sun, with my loving wife knitting by my side as the day died out of the sky, with my chil-

dren upon my knees and their arms about my neck; yes, I would rather have been that poor peasant and gone down to the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust, than to have been that imperial impersonation of force and murder known as Napoleon the Great.

No, it is not necessary to be great to be happy. It is not necessary to be rich to be generous. It is not necessary to be powerful to be just. When the world is free, this question will be settled. A new creed will be written. In that creed, there will be but one word, "Liberty." Oh, Liberty, float not forever in the far horizon, remain not forever in the dream of the enthusiast, dwell not forever in the song of the poet, but come and make thy home among the children of men.

I know not what thoughts, what discoveries, what inventions may leap from the brain of the world; I know not what garments of glory may be woven by the years to come; I cannot dream of the victories to be won upon the fields of thought. But I do know, that coming from the infinite sea of the future there shall never touch this bank and shoal of time, a richer gift, a rarer blessing, than liberty.

Historical Setting of Ingersoll's Discourse at His Brother's Grave

The funeral discourse of Robert Ingersoll, delivered over the remains of his elder brother, Ebon C. Ingersoll, is one of the few most rare and perfect gems of American commemorative eloquence, bearing comparison in every respect, except in its setting and its background, with Lincoln's more famous address at Gettysburg.

It was a speech unconnected with the thread of history; and yet it was a speech, so sublime in thought, so pathetic

in expression, and so beautiful in its imagery and diction that it, itself, may be said to have made history, to mark an epoch, to furnish an isolated and unique episode which mankind will never forget.

On May 31, 1879, Ebon C. Ingersoll died at his home in the City of Washington; and, on the second of June, the funeral services over his remains were conducted in the presence of one of the largest and most distinguished gatherings ever assembled for such a purpose in Washington, the pallbearers including men of great national prominence, like Senators William B. Allison, James G. Blaine, and Daniel W. Voorhees, the future Vice President, Adlai E. Stevenson, and the future President, James A. Garfield.

Because Ebon Ingersoll had shared fully the anti-theological views of his brother, it was not expected or desired that any Christian minister should speak at his funeral; but, to provide for just such an event, to ensure some sort of fitting burial service, both he and his brother had pledged themselves mutually in case of the other's death to deliver the funeral discourse.

And hence, it fell to the sad lot of Robert to perform this service for Ebon, who fell first by the wayside in the very prime of life. No task could have been more difficult, and yet no task was ever committed to hands more loving or more capable to perform their trust.

Since their earliest childhood, these two brothers, bereft of the loving care of a mother, had found in each other's companionship the joy of souls attuned to common sorrow and common happiness, to common thoughts, ambitions, ideals. Together, they had spent the gloomy Sabbaths of their boyhood; together they had listened to frightful and dreary dissertations on orthodoxy; and together they had rebelled against

the religion of their fathers. Together, they had studied law; together, they had hung out their shingle at Shawneetown and Peoria; together, they had climbed the ladder to success and fame in politics and law; together, they had come to the national capital for further triumphs; and now, when "eager winds were kissing every sail," in "the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage," the one was "dashed against an unseen rock," and the other left to face life's joys and sorrows alone and desolate.

As Ingersoll's biographer has said, "whether any other two brothers ever loved each other as intensely as they, cannot, of course, be stated; but that no other two ever loved more intensely is at least morally certain."

The death of Ebon Ingersoll brought to his brother a grief more poignant and overwhelming than he had ever experienced before, and it was therefore with the greatest effort that on the occasion of his funeral, Robert Ingersoll was able to master his feelings sufficiently to carry out the loving compact made years before. Yet this he struggled manfully to do. At last he stood beside his brother's bier. Tears welling up into his eyes frequently interfered with the utterance of his brief discourse, and grief finally compelled an interruption more pathetic even than his words.

The address that he delivered upon this occasion could not be marred, however, by any manifestation of his personal sorrow. It was in fact merely a sublime expression itself of this same sorrow; and both to those who listened, and to all others who have since come face to face with bereavement, it was, and is, one of the most beautiful, the most pathetic, and the most solacing utterances that could be made in the presence of death and over the remains of those whom we have loved.

Robert G. Ingersoll: At His Brother's Grave

June 3, 1879

My Friends: I am going to do that which the dead oft promised he would do for me.

The loved and loving brother, husband, father, friend, died where manhood's morning almost touches noon, and while the shadows still were falling toward the west.

He had not passed on life's highway the stone that marks the highest point, but, being weary for a moment, lay down by the wayside, and using his burden for a pillow, fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. While yet in love with life and raptured with the world, he passed to silence and pathetic dust.

Yet, after all, it may be best, just in the happiest, sunniest hour of all the voyage, while eager winds are kissing every sail, to dash against the unseen rock, and in an instant hear the billows roar above the sunken ship. For, whether in mid-sea or 'mong the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck at last will mark the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every moment jewelled with a joy, will at its close become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.

This brave and tender man in every storm of life was oak and rock, but in the sunshine he was vine and flower. He was the friend of all heroic souls. He climbed the heights and left all superstition far below, while on his forehead fell the golden dawning of the grander day.

He loved the beautiful, and was with color, form, and music touched to tears. He sided with the weak, and with a willing hand gave alms; with loyal heart and with purest hands he faithfully discharged all public trusts.

He was a worshiper of liberty, a friend of the oppressed. A thousand times I have heard him quote these words: "For justice, all place, a temple, and all seasons, summer." He believed that happiness was the only good, reason the only torch, justice the only worship, humanity the only religion, and love the only priest. He added to the sum of human joy; and were every one to whom he did some loving service to bring a blossom to his grave, he would sleep tonight beneath a wilderness of flowers.

Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.

He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his last breath, "I am better now." Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas, and tears and fears, that these dear words are true of all the countless dead.

And now to you who have been chosen, from among the many men he loved, to do the last sad office for the dead, we give his sacred dust. Speech cannot contain our love. There was, there is, no greater, stronger, manlier man.

Historical Setting of Ingersoll's Decoration Day Oration

Twice in the career of Robert G. Ingersoll, he produced ecstatic delight among thousands of listeners by incorporating in his addresses a word-picture of war, well-known now as his *Vision of War,* which, his biographer has said, is "beyond the uttermost reach of dispute, the most perfect of war-paintings."

The first occasion for the use of this wonderful prose-poem

came during an address to Civil War veterans at Indianapolis, on September 21, 1876, when Ingersoll, speaking from the stump in the Republican campaign for the election of Hayes to the presidency, addressed assembled thousands in the open air on: *Why He Was a Republican.*

Seldom has any orator been subjected to a more severe test than was Ingersoll on this occasion; for, during the delivery of his speech, two extremely heavy showers occurred, and yet not one of his listeners left the crowd to seek shelter; while many, indeed, remained rapt and motionless, as water actually trickled down their backs from neighboring umbrellas. From the pathos of his utterance, women became hysterical; and from the same cause strong men broke down and wept. Even Garfield, who was seated on the platform near Ingersoll, was visibly affected, and, at the conclusion of the address, greeted the speaker with a tearful embrace.

So famous became the *Vision of War,* as Ingersoll gave it to these Civil War Veterans in 1876, that, twelve years afterwards, in New York City, when he was to be the principal speaker for the Memorial Day exercises conducted by the Grand Army, he was requested to incorporate this gem in his address; and, doing so, he appended to it another effective word-picture, which has become known as his *Vision of Peace.*

On this second occasion, Ingersoll spoke in the great Metropolitan Opera House. According to the New York *Times,* every seat in the house was filled, and hundreds stood, glad to find any place where they could see and hear. Many empty sleeves were there in evidence, it is said, worn by veterans with scanty locks and grizzled mustaches. On the breasts of many faded uniforms, glittered the badges of legions in which veterans had fought and suffered; and, at the side of these veterans, sat wives and daughters, whose hearts had ached at home while those they loved were serving at the front.

Chauncey Depew was chairman of the evening's exercises. With the greatest simplicity and pointedness, he introduced the speaker as "the greatest living orator, and one of the great controversialists of the age."

Then Colonel Ingersoll stepped forth. From the beginning to the end of his discourse, each point that he made was greeted with enthusiastic cheers; but, during his peroration, that is, during the delivery of his *Vision of War* and his *Vision of Peace,* it is said that the audience simply went wild.

"It was a grand oration," said the New York *Times,* "and it was listened to by enthusiastic and appreciative hearers, upon whom not a single word was lost, and in whose hearts every word awoke a responsive echo. Nor did the enthusiasm, which Colonel Ingersoll created, end until the very last, when the whole assemblage arose and sang *America* in a way which will never be forgotten. It was a great ending of a great evening."

Yet what made this evening great was solely and simply Ingersoll's rendition of his *Vision of War.* This beautiful, imaginative flight of eloquence stirred men's souls to their very depths; and the effect that it produced has led at least one of Ingersoll's biographers to say that "if he had spoken no word before or since, it would still be the verdict, that he was, with consummate ease, the most eloquent orator of the English tongue."

Robert G. Ingersoll: Decoration Day Oration

May 30, 1888

The past rises before me like a dream. Again we are in the great struggle for national life. We hear the sounds of preparation; the music of the boisterous drums; the silver voices of heroic bugles. We see thousands of assemblages, and hear the appeals of orators. We see the pale cheeks of

women, and the flushed faces of men; and in those assemblages we see all the dead whose dust we have covered with flowers. We lose sight of them no more. We are with them when they enlist in the great army of freedom. We see them part with those they love. Some are walking for the last time in quiet, woody places with the maidens they adore. We hear the whisperings and the sweet vows of eternal love as they lingeringly part forever. Others are bending over cradles, kissing babes that are asleep. Some are receiving the blessings of old men. Some are parting with mothers who hold them and press them to their hearts again and again and say nothing. Kisses and tears, tears and kisses—divine mingling of agony and joy! And some are talking with wives, and endeavoring with brave words, spoken in the old tones, to drive from their hearts the awful fear. We see them part. We see the wife standing in the door with the babe in her arms—standing in the sunlight, sobbing. At the turn of the road a hand waves—she answers by holding high in her loving arms the child. He is gone, and forever.

We see them all as they march proudly away under the flaunting flags, keeping time to the grand, wild music of war—marching down the streets of the great cities—through the towns and across the prairies—down to the fields of glory, to do and to die for the eternal right.

We go with them, one and all. We are by their side on the gory fields—in all the hospitals of pain—on all the weary marches. We stand guard with them in the wild storm and under the quiet stars. We are with them in ravines running with blood—in the furrows of old fields. We are with them between contending hosts, unable to move, wild with thirst, the life ebbing slowly away among the withered leaves. We

see them pierced with balls and torn with shells, in the trenches, by forts, and in the whirlwind of the charge, where men become iron, with nerves of steel.

We are with them in the prisons of hatred and famine; but human speech can never tell what they endured.

We are at home when the news comes that they are dead. We see the maiden in the shadow of her first sorrow. We see the silvered head of the old man bowed with the last grief.

The past rises before us, and we see four millions of human beings governed by the lash—we see them bound hand and foot—we hear the strokes of cruel whips—we see the hounds tracking women through tangled swamps. We see babes sold from the breasts of mothers. Cruelty unspeakable! Outrage infinite!

Four million bodies in chains—four million souls in fetters. All the sacred relations of wife, mother, father, and child trampled beneath the brutal feet of might. And all this was done under our own beautiful banner of the free.

The past rises before us. We hear the roar and shriek of the bursting shell. The broken fetters fall. These heroes died. We look. Instead of slaves we see men and women and children. The wand of progress touches the auction block, the slave pen, the whipping post, and we see homes and firesides and school-houses and books, and where all was want and crime and cruelty and fear, we see the faces of the free.

These heroes are dead. They died for liberty—they died for us. They are at rest. They sleep in the land they made free, under the flag they rendered stainless, under the solemn pines, the sad hemlocks, the tearful willows, and the embracing vines. They sleep beneath the shadows of the clouds, careless alike of sunshine or of storm, each in the windowless Palace

of Rest. Earth may run red with other wars—they are at peace. In the midst of battle, in the roar of conflict, they found the serenity of death. I have one sentiment for soldiers living and dead: Cheers for the living; tears for the dead.

A vision of the future rises:

I see our country filled with happy homes, with firesides of content,—the foremost land of all the earth.

I see a world where thrones have crumbled and where kings are dust. The aristocracy of idleness has perished from the earth.

I see a world without a slave. Man at last is free, Nature's forces have by Science been enslaved. Lightning and light, wind and wave, frost and flame, and all the secret, subtle powers of earth and air are the tireless toilers for the human race.

I see a world at peace, adorned with every form of art, with Music's myriad voices thrilled, while lips are rich with words of love and truth; a world in which no exile sighs, no prisoner mourns; a world on which the gibbet's shadow does not fall; a world where labor reaps its full reward, where work and worth go hand in hand, where the poor girl trying to win bread with the needle—the needle that has been called "the asp for the breast of the poor,"—is not driven to the desperate choice of crime or death, of suicide or shame.

I see a world without the beggar's outstretched palm, the miser's heartless, stony stare, the piteous wail of want, the livid lips of lies, the cruel eyes of scorn.

I see a race without disease of flesh or brain,—shapely and fair,—the married harmony of form and function,—and as I look, life lengthens, joy deepens, love canopies the earth; and over all, in the great dome, shines the eternal star of human hope.

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8. James A. Garfield: *Nomination of Sherman* (1880)—See Bryan's *World's Famous Orations* (1906) X, 99-106; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) X, 261-265.

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See Andrews's *United States in Our Own Times;* Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Lingley's *Since the Civil War;* Oberholtzer's *History of U. S. Since the Civil War;* Paxson's *Recent History of U. S.;* Peck's *Twenty Years of the Republic;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Tweedy's *History of Republican National Conventions.*

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Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Ingersoll's *Nomination of Blaine*

I. Who was Benjamin H. Bristow?—and what evidence is there that the question of his loyalty was one of party loyalty and not loyalty to the country?

II. What internal evidence is there that Ingersoll regarded Republicanism and patriotism as synonymous?—and how did he justify such a viewpoint? —See his *Indianapolis Speech* (1876).

III. What indirect reference does Ingersoll make to: (1) Hayes as a dark horse; (2) Grant's course in civil service reform—See Rhodes; (3) the Greenback party; (4) negro suffrage; (5) the case of Costello, Warren, and Burke—See Blaine in Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.;* (6) the pension system for Civil War veterans—See Bassett, 726; (7) the protective tariff of 1875—See Lingley, 106, Bassett, 648; (8) the Know Nothing remnant in the Republican party; (9) Blaine's personal vindication in Congress against charges connected with the *Mulligan Letters;* (10) the attitude of the Liberal Republican faction on Reconstruction —See Bassett, 648; (11) Blaine's *Retort to Benjamin H. Hill*—See Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.;* (12) Blaine's *Speech on Amnesty for Jefferson Davis.*

IV. What were Andersonville and Libby?

V. What is the meaning of the expressions: (1) whose sufferings he so eloquently remembers—See *Speech on Amnesty for Davis;* (2) prince of parliamentarians?

On Ingersoll's *Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child*

I. What internal evidence is there that Ingersoll was familiar with: (1) Tennyson's *Bugle Song;* (2) Gray's *Elegy,* Stanzas 8-16; (3) Milton's L'Allegro, lines 25-36; (4) Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* Act I, Scene VII, line 7?

II. When were Napoleon's remains removed to Paris?—See Hazen's *Mod. European Hist.,* 247.

III. When did Napoleon stand on the banks of the Seine and contemplate suicide?—See Wells's *Outline of Hist.,* Bk. VIII, Chap. 38, Sec. 1; Abbott's *History of Napoleon* (1859) 62-63.

IV. When did Napoleon quell the mob in the streets of Paris?—See Adams's *Growth of the Fr. Nation,* 297.

V. What is the story of: (1) Napoleon at the head of the army in Italy?—See Hazen, 156-158; (2) Napoleon crossing the bridge of Lodi—See Hazen, 159; (3) Napoleon in the shadow of the Pyramids—See Hazen, 169-173; (4) Napoleon crossing the Alps—See Hazen, 182; (5) Napoleon in the Russian campaign—See Hazen, 234-237; (6) Napoleon at Leipsic, and Elba, and on his return to power—See Hazen, 238-244; (7) Napoleon at Waterloo—See Hazen, 246; Hugo's Les Miserables, Part II, Book I; Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World;* (8) Napoleon at St. Helena—See Rosebury's *Napoleon, the Last Phase,* Chaps. IV-VII, XI-XVI; *Cambridge Mod. Hist.*

VI. How many widows and orphans had Napoleon made?—See Lord's *Beacon Lights of History,* IV, 435.

On Ingersoll's *Decoration Day Oration*

I. What internal evidence is there that Ingersoll was familiar with: (1) Walt Whitman's *Eighteen Sixty-One;* (2) Whitman's *Beat! Beat! Drums!* (3) Longfellow's *Killed at the Ford;* (4) Whitman's *Come Up from the Fields, Mother;* (5) Whittier's *Our Fellow-Countrymen in Chains;* (6) Whittier's *The Hunters of Men;* (7) Whittier's *Farewell of a Virginia Slave Mother;* (8) Thomas Campbell's *Exile of Erin;* (9) Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon;* (10) Thomas Hood's *The Bridge of Sighs;* (11) Thomas Hood's *The Song of the Shirt;* (12) Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra,* Act V, Scene II, lines 289-359; (13) Lowell's *Vision of Sir Launfal;* (14) Tennyson's *Ring Out Wild Bells?*

Dictionary Studies from Robert G. Ingersoll

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. amorous 2. canopies 3. chimneys 4. flaunting 5. foreheads 6. gibbet 7. integrity 8. intrepid 9. legal tender 10. maligner 11. sarcophagus 12. wand 13. warp 14. woof

CHAPTER XVII

HENRY W. GRADY

Henry W. Grady's Place in the History of His Times

Henry W. Grady is generally recognized as the most brilliant Southern orator since the days of the Civil War. Upon him largely fell the task of expounding to the South its limitless opportunities for an industrial reawakening after the disheartening experiences of the Reconstruction period. And to him also came the task and the duty to explain to the North the attitude of the South toward the solution of its race problem; to ask of the North that it give to the South its confidence and its co-operation for the proper solution of this problem; and to plead with the North for a complete reconciliation after the long years of misunderstanding and mutual distrust.

For undertaking such tasks and such duties with an eloquence that has seldom been equaled, Grady may be spoken of as "the apostle of a New South"—its enthusiastic champion at home and its welcome ambassador among the peoples of the North.

Throughout a period of only three years, between 1886 and 1889, Grady was active as a nationally known orator in carrying out this mission; but, during these years, he acquired a reputation that places him in the forefront of American orators of all times.

These years when Grady was active were the last two years of President Cleveland's first administration and the first year of the adminstration of Benjamin Harrison. Throughout this period there was anxious political foreboding, first in the North

among Republicans, and then in the South among Democrats, at the prospect of losing control and influence at the national capital.

It will be remembered that President Cleveland was the first Democratic President to be elected since the Civil War. His election in 1884 had been largely due to defection in the Republican party at the North, when the so-called Mugwump faction, led by men like Henry Ward Beecher and George William Curtis, had declared that the old Civil War issues were dead; that the Republican party must be disciplined for its adherence to the spoils system; and that new issues involving industrial expansion and the curbing of corporate wealth must be given weight.

The South, of course, was elated over Cleveland's election; but the North—or at least the Republican party in the North—was greatly dejected. It claimed that "the Confederate brigadiers were again in the saddle"; that all that had been won in the war for the Union was now in jeopardy; and that the South, which had to be recognized by Cleveland in his appointments, "remained in heart, substance, and purpose what it was in 1860."

To add fuel to the flames, Cleveland perhaps wisely and perhaps unwisely approved a measure giving pensions to all Mexican War veterans, who were chiefly Southerners, and vetoed a pension measure for dependents of Northern soldiers of the Civil War. This caused much adverse criticism; but a subsequent measure proposing to return captured Confederate battle flags, along with all other battle flags, to the States whence they came, aroused a great flame of indignant opposition.

The Republicans felt that they must get back into power. They attributed their defeat to the suppression of the negro Republican vote in the South by illegal means; and, hence,

they threatened, when restored to control in the government, to force the Southern States to stop discrimination against the negro vote. On this issue, to a large extent, as well as on the issue of the tariff, the Republicans fought in 1888, and, in that year, they regained control of both Houses of Congress, and elected Harrison as Cleveland's successor. But they were not ready to press their so-called "Force Bill" for another two years, because the Congress then elected did not assemble until December, 1889, and did not begin its real labors until the early months of 1890. At that time, Congressman Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts introduced his famous measure to restore negro suffrage in the South; and, had it not been for a change of heart among certain Northern Senators, due to investments of Northern capital in Southern enterprises, a *Federal Election Law,* or *Force Bill,* would have been passed. It did, in fact, pass the House, but it was allowed to die a lingering death in the Senate.

While such issues were disturbing the peace of the country, Henry W. Grady came forward as the spokesman of the New South, to invite Northern capital to help in upbuilding Southern industries; to explain to the North the attitude of the South toward the race problem; and to exhort his fellow-citizens in the South to remain solidly Democratic in order to prevent any return to the old regime of extravagant waste and corruption that had been experienced in the days of Reconstruction under carpetbag and negro governments.

The great utterances of Henry W. Grady in the field of oratory were restricted to the years between 1886 and 1889; but the background of history from which he drew his inspiration and his facts extended from the Civil War, down through two decades of valiant effort upon the part of the South to restore its lost prestige and prosperity.

During the Civil War, Grady was a boy of from ten to fourteen years of age. His father had left home at the earliest opportunity for service at the front with the Confederate armies in Virginia. For four years, Grady's home in Georgia was protected only by the loyalty of slaves that were left there by the head of the household. In the last year of the war, the Federal armies under General Sherman carried death and destruction through Grady's native State in their advance from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and from Atlanta to the sea, whence they proceeded northward into the Carolinas, thus encircling in their march the town of Athens where the Grady home was situated; and, in this same year, Grady learned of the death of his father, who was killed in battle during one of the engagements about Petersburg, when Grant was pounding his way against Lee's forces into Richmond.

Upon Grady as a boy, therefore, the Civil War left an indelible impression; but upon Grady as a youth, the period of Reconstruction, with its carpetbag and negro government, left an impression that was equally indelible. During the years between 1865 and 1868, he witnessed the total disfranchisement of the old governing class throughout the South and the military despotism of Northern commanders, who had been sent to govern the Southern States as conquered territories. Then, from 1868 to 1872, he witnessed the operation of State governments erected by Northern adventurers with the support of the newly enfranchised ex-slaves and renegade whites of the South. He witnessed the wild orgies of corruption and graft in these governments that brought bankruptcy and ruin in their wake. And finally he witnessed the general uprising of the white population to regain by force, or by chicanery, the lost supremacy of their race in administering the State governments.

As a young man, he witnessed the restoration to power of the white race by the general amnesty measures of 1872. He witnessed the creation of a solidly Democratic South to combat the menace of a revived Negro-Republican regime. In 1874, he witnessed the triumph of the national Democratic party, with the aid of the South, in gaining control of the lower House of Congress; and, in 1876, he witnessed the near-triumph of the Democratic party in its efforts to capture the presidency, when only fraud and sharp practice kept it from attaining its goal.

Then, with the election of Hayes to the presidency, and with the subsequent lenient policy toward the South, prompted by assurance of continued Republican control of the national government, he witnessed the gradual dying-out of sectional animosity through the next eight years of Republican rule. But, with the election of Cleveland in 1884, all the old sectional rancor seemed to spring up overnight again. The South at that time needed a spokesman to defend its policy and to secure the peace of the Union. The older leaders had nearly all passed away, and Grady felt that upon him must fall the task of being a peace-maker between the two sections of the country.

As Grady undertook this task, he knew that he must perform it in a spirit of reverence for the heroic leaders of the South during the Civil War—for such men as Robert Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens of his own State, and Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, who was yet living and active in stirring the memories of the past. He could not perform his purpose, however, unless he blended with his praise for these men an equal respect for the leaders of the North, such as Webster from an earlier generation, and Lincoln and Grant from the

generation of those who upheld the Union in the strife between the sections.

Throughout all of Grady's speaking, Benjamin H. Hill of Georgia seemed to inspire him most with the attitude that he took toward the problems of meeting the new conditions imposed by the Reconstruction policy of the Federal government. Hill, in fact, created the slogan of the New South, which Grady adopted; but Hill did more: in his speech of 1876, *In Reply to Blaine,* he showed that submission to the arbitrament of war need not be accompanied by any disparagement of the work done by the former Confederate leaders.

Benjamin H. Hill, therefore, was Grady's great prototype, but not his only prototype. Less intimately connected with Grady, but much like him in his purpose and method, was also Lucius Q. C. Lamar of Mississippi, who, in 1874, delivered a famous peace message in his *Eulogy of Charles Sumner,* before the two Houses of Congress.

While Grady was yet unknown and in training for his great task, he heard, among Northerners, the solacing voice of Carl Schurz, who, in 1872, pleaded for a general amnesty; and, in contrast with this voice, the bitter, strident campaign oratory of 1876 from James G. Blaine and Robert G. Ingersoll, that stirred the soul of the South to hot resentment.

When, however, Grady came to deliver his message for a New South, a decade later, in 1886, he felt that, in the North, even among the old Republican orators, he had some friends, such as Henry Ward Beecher and George William Curtis; for these men had separated themselves from the old organization on the ground that Civil War issues were dead.

At this time, he had to meet the old antipathies that were once again fanned into flame by such speakers as James G.

Blaine, Robert G. Ingersoll, John Sherman, George Frisbie Hoar, and Henry Cabot Lodge; but this he did with brilliant tact that has seldom been equaled.

That Grady was able to hold his own in the South and at the same time to placate the North, to win its love and admiration, and to forestall its movement for returning the Southern governments to the domination of the black race by the use of Federal bayonets, was an achievement almost incredible; and, for this achievement, Grady is hailed as the greatest orator of the South since the Civil War—a peer of America's foremost orators of all times.

The Life of Henry W. Grady

Henry W. Grady was the most gifted orator of the South in the period of its recovery from the disasters of the Civil War and from the mistaken policy of Reconstruction. On December 22, 1886, he was comparatively unknown beyond the borders of his own State of Georgia; yet, on the following morning, he awoke to find that, as the result of a single speech, he had become one of America's most famous orators of all times.

Seldom in America had there been any parallel for such an achievement in the field of eloquence. Only, perhaps, in the case of Patrick Henry when he delivered "his electrical warning to George Third" in 1765; or in the case of Wendell Phillips when he delivered his impromptu speech on *The Murder of Lovejoy* in 1837; or in the case of Robert G. Ingersoll when he nominated Blaine at the Republican National Convention in 1876, had there been any such triumph as Grady achieved on this occasion in New York City when he delivered his famous speech, entitled *The New South.*

For three years, thereafter, Grady stood before the country in the capacity of an orator, whose chief theme was the rebuilding of the South and the reconciliation of the two sections of the country that had lately been estranged by civil strife. By speech after speech, in those three years, he added continually to his fame; and then, at the time of his sudden death, he was recognized everywhere throughout America as one of the most masterful orators of the English tongue.

Henry W. Grady was born at Athens, Georgia, in 1851, and there grew up in the luxury of a rich Southern home. When a mere boy of ten, he saw the outbreak of the Civil War, and lost the guiding influence of his venerated father, who departed at once for service in the Confederate army.

The havoc wrought in Georgia during the last year of this war, Grady never could forget; and when, at its conclusion, the body of his dead father, killed in battle at Petersburg, Virginia, was brought back to Athens for burial, he received a shock that left its mark upon his character throughout the remainder of his life.

At the age of seventeen, during the troublous period of Reconstruction, when Benjamin H. Hill and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia were setting a noble example of courage and good-will to the whole South, Grady graduated at the State University in his home town, and then proceeded to the University of Virginia, where he undertook a post-graduate study of journalism and oratory.

Here he won a brilliant local reputation as a college debater and orator; but, at the conclusion of his course, like many other promising students, he dropped from public notice and became immersed in the work of journalism. At first, he tried his hand in editing the Rome (Georgia) *Commercial,* then the Atlanta *Herald,* and finally the Atlanta *Capital.* In

all of these papers, he was heavily interested financially; and all, after a brief period of brilliant competition, went into bankruptcy, which nearly wrecked the youthful editor.

In 1875, he stood on the streets of Atlanta with only fifty dollars to his name and no employment to give him or his family support. He gave twenty dollars to his wife, and with the remainder set out for New York to see if he could secure employment on one of the great metropolitan newspapers.

By rare good fortune, he obtained the chance to write for the New York *Herald* an account of the recent Southern State Constitutional Conventions. With this subject he was thoroughly familiar, and his article was so colorful that the editor engaged him at once to be the Southern correspondent for this great daily.

On his return to Atlanta, he began his long career of brilliantly successful journalism. Not only was he henceforth for five years a correspondent of the New York *Herald,* but he was also a member of the editorial staff of the Atlanta *Constitution.*

During this period, he distinguished himself for the graphic reports he made on the South Carolina riots of 1876, and on the election frauds perpetrated in Florida during the presidential election of the same year, which gave rise to the famous Hayes-Tilden controversy.

While in Florida to investigate these frauds, he was intimately associated with Senator Joseph E. Brown, the wartime governor of Georgia, who had been appointed by Tilden to look out for his interests; and he, therefore, had an excellent opportunity to study at short range the innermost workings of one of the shrewdest political minds in the South.

But, on this occasion, he did more than to study the political situation of the South. He began, at this time, to make a care-

ful survey of the economic resources of that whole section of the country with a view to creating an industrial reawakening in the South.

In 1879, he again visited New York to get material for a series of articles on the metropolis for use in the South; and, while there, he was introduced by Governor John B. Gordon of Georgia to the financier, Cyrus W. Field. From him he borrowed twenty thousand dollars to buy a one-fourth interest in the Atlanta *Constitution.* The purchase was promptly made; and, thereafter, Grady devoted himself so thoroughly to improving the quality of this paper that, when he died a decade later, his interest in the journal was worth one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

In 1886, Grady was invited as the first representative of the South since the Civil War to make an address at the annual banquet of the New England Society of New York City, on the evening of December 22. He realized that the occasion presented a magnificent opportunity to appeal for a better understanding between North and South; and, with an eloquence that seemed almost inspired, he delivered before that gathering an oration entitled *The New South,* which was immediately hailed throughout the whole country as one of the most brilliant specimens of oratorical literature that had been produced in America since the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock.

Henceforth, and instantaneously, Grady was recognized as one of the foremost orators in the land. During the next three years, his services were everywhere in demand, especially in the South, where he came to be regarded with veneration.

In 1887, he delivered a celebrated address on *Prohibition* at Atlanta; and the next year, 1888, he brought forth two even better-known addresses: the first, on *The South and Her Prob-*

lems at the Dallas (Texas) State Fair; and the second, on *The Solid South* at the Augusta Exposition, in Georgia.

The year 1889 marks, however, the great climax in Grady's brief career; for, in that year, he distinguished himself still further by four remarkable addresses: the first, *Against Centralization,* at the commencement exercises of the University of Virginia; the second, on *The Farmer and the Cities,* at Elberton, Georgia; and the third and fourth, in Boston on *The Race Problem in the South,* and on *Plymouth Rock and Democracy.*

The sad sequel of Grady's speaking in Boston was that he caught cold in the inclement weather of the Northern city; and, within ten days, he was carried off by pneumonia in a most untimely death.

For the brief period of only three years, he had stood before the nation in the rôle of peace-maker; yet in that period he had blazoned his name indelibly upon the list of America's greatest orators.

No other orator in America has ever possessed Grady's subtle power of painting vivid word-pictures that charm the fancy and lead captive the imagination, unless perhaps it was Robert G. Ingersoll in some of his most touching bits of pathos. But these two orators were indeed exceptional. They were as much prose-poets, as they were orators.

To gain some conception of Grady's style of oratory, we need only to recall the comment of a Southern critic, who said that "Grady makes you feel like you want to be an angel and with the angels stand"—or we may recall the comment of a Boston lawyer, that his speech was like a "cannon ball in full flight, fringed with flowers."

It was not Grady, the stylist, however, that made him truly great, but rather Grady, the man. He was indeed a type, like

Lincoln,—the type of the New South, that was enamoured with the work of reconstruction and reconciliation. As Patrick Henry was the great orator of the Revolution, and Wendell Phillips the great orator of the anti-slavery agitation, so Henry W. Grady was the orator of orators among the peace-makers, whose task it was to extinguish all the smouldering embers of the war, and make the North and South see, eye to eye, as brothers building up anew a glorious future for the country that was to be theirs in common, henceforth, and for ever.

Historical Setting of Grady's the New South Speech

The New South, an impromptu address made by Henry W. Grady before the New England Society of New York City at its annual banquet on December 22, 1886, was one of the great epoch-making addresses in the history of American eloquence.

Of this address, Thomas DeWitt Talmage, himself a great orator, has said: "The bravest speech made for the last quarter of a century was made by Mr. Grady in New York at the New England dinner. I sat with him that evening," said Talmage, "and know something of his anxieties; for he was to tread on dangerous ground, and might by one mis-spoken word have antagonized both sections of the country; yet his speech was a victory that thrilled all of us who heard him and all who read him. That speech, great for wisdom, great for kindness, great for pacification, great for bravery, will go down to the generations with Webster's speech at Bunker Hill, William Wirt's speech at the arraignment of Aaron Burr, Edmund Burke's speech on Warren Hastings, and Robert Emmet's speech for his own vindication."

What made this speech so brave was that Henry W. Grady, then a young man scarcely known beyond the borders of his

own State, stood alone in a great Northern metropolis, the first Southerner since the Civil War to be a guest of the society under whose auspices he was to speak, and there, in that presence, at a time when partisan spirit was doing its utmost again to stir the embers of civil strife, he was to be the sole champion and exponent of the New South, yielding nothing to the North that would disparage the glory or honor of the Old South, yet with perfect poise, appealing to the North for reconciliation, for brotherhood, for mutual understanding, and for co-operation in the upbuilding of our common country.

The work of reconciliation between North and South since Grady's time has been so thorough and far-reaching that it is hard for a younger generation to realize the sectional prejudice awakened by political partisans during the years between 1885 and 1889, which mark the first Democratic administration in Washington since before the Civil War. The campaign which resulted in Cleveland's election to the presidency, and the State and Congressional campaigns in the succeeding years of 1885 and 1886 were conducted by many Republicans on the stale and thread-bare issue of "waving the bloody shirt"; and when Cleveland was inaugurated, these doughty peace-time warriors, unable to forget the horrors of the past, because they meant for them the spoils of office, were quick to announce that now "the South was again in the saddle."

Old-time Republicans were bitterly chagrined by their defeat at the polls in 1884; and this, they attributed, in attacks upon the South, to violence and fraud, which, they claimed, practically disfranchised the negro voter. The shoo-fly cry of "bloody shirt," they said, could not stop their arraignment of election methods that destroyed the sanctity of the ballot box; and "with the help of God," said John Sherman of Ohio, "we are going to arrange that the vote of the man who fol-

lowed Lee shall no longer have, in national affairs, three times the power of the vote of the man who followed Grant."

Against this old school of Republicans, however, was arrayed a new school of liberal and independent thinkers, including such men as Henry Ward Beecher, Carl Schurz, and George William Curtis, who believed that the country was faced by new issues of the greatest magnitude, in the antagonism of labor and capital, in the preservation of our natural resources from the grip of huge corporations, and in the assimilation of our immigrants. These men, turning away from the old Republican party and its worn-out platform of Civil War prejudice, had given their support to Cleveland; and it was doubtless due to their influence that Grady, the foremost editor of the Far South and a practical dictator in the politics of his own State, was invited to speak in the Northern metropolis, as a trustworthy representative of the spirit that animated the New South.

When Grady rose to his feet at the banquet table of the New England Society, he thought merely that he would make a formal response to the toast of *The South;* but, as he said afterwards, "there was something in the scene that was inspiring." At the same table near him sat William Tecumseh Sherman, the Union general, who had marched through Grady's native State, from Atlanta to the sea, carrying everywhere the desolation of fire and sword; and all about him were "the fat and jocund sons of New England, who had prospered by the results of the war, while Grady's own people had had the direst poverty for their portion."

"When I found myself on my feet," said Grady, on his return to Georgia, "every nerve in my body was strung as tight as a fiddle-string, and all tingling. I knew then that I had a message for that assemblage; and, as soon as I opened my mouth, it came rushing out."

In the whole range of English literature, there is nothing more pathetic than Grady's description in this speech of the return in defeat of the Confederate veteran, standing out, as it does, in marked contrast with the equally vivid description of the return in triumph of the Northern veteran given in Talmage's speech on the same occasion. There is also nothing more wholesome than Grady's bubbling humor, when he referred to Sherman as a man, thought, in the South, to be "kind of careless about fire"; there is nothing more beautifully reverent than his allusion to the "plain, white shaft" on the central hill of Athens that marked the grave of his father, who "died in a brave and simple faith"; there is nothing more genuine than his expression of gratitude to the negro race for their loyalty to Southern masters during the war; and, finally, there is nothing more bewitchingly persuasive than his appeal to New England not to withhold from the South, "save in strained courtesy, the hand, which, straight from his soldier's heart, Grant offered to Lee at Appomattox."

This speech, says Joel Chandler Harris in his *Life of Grady,* created a "tremendous sensation." Yet it was "an impromptu effort from beginning to end. It was the creature of the occasion. Fortunately, a reporter of the New York *Tribune* was present, and he has preserved for us something of the flavor and finish of the words, which the young Southerner uttered on his first introduction to a Northern audience. The tremendous impression that he made, however, has never been recorded. There was a faint echo of it in the newspapers, a buzz, and a stir in the hotel lobbies, but all that was said was inadequate to explain why these sons of New England, accustomed as they were to eloquence of the rarer kind, as the volumes of their proceedings show, rose to their feet and shouted themselves hoarse over the simple and impromptu effort of this young Georgian."

This description, from the pen of Joel Chandler Harris, is the best we have for the effect of Grady's speech upon his immediate audience; but volumes upon volumes would not contain the numberless descriptions we have for the effect of this speech upon the country as a whole. For Grady, himself, it meant a "meteoric rise to fame" as one of the country's foremost orators; but, for the South, the North, and the country as a whole, it meant the dawn of a new era of mutual understanding and good-will.

Henry W. Grady: The New South

December 22, 1886

"There was a South of slavery and secession—that South is dead. There is a South of Union and freedom—that South, thank God, is living, breathing, growing every hour." These words delivered from the immortal lips of Benjamin H. Hill, at Tammany Hall, in 1866. true then, and truer now, I shall make my text to-night.

In speaking to the toast with which you have honored me, I accept the term, "The New South," as in no sense disparaging to the old. Dear to me, sir, is the home of my childhood, and the traditions of my people. I would not, if I could, dim the glory they won in peace and war, or by word or deed take aught from the splendor and grace of their civilization, never equaled in its chivalric strength and grace. There is a new South, not through protest against the old, but because of new conditions, new adjustments, and, if you please, new ideas and aspirations.

Doctor Talmage[1] has drawn for you with a master's hand,

[1] See Talmage: *Behold the American* in Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) III, 1122-1128; (1923) III, 307-313.

the picture of your returning armies. He has told you how in the pomp and circumstance of war, they came back to you, marching with proud and victorious tread, reading their glory in a nation's eyes! Will you bear with me while I tell you of another army that sought its home at the close of the late war—an army that marched in defeat and not in victory—in pathos and not in splendor, but in glory that equaled yours, and to hearts as loving as ever welcomed heroes home? Let me picture to you the foot-sore Confederate soldier, as, buttoning up in his faded gray jacket the parole which was to bear testimony to his children of his fidelity and faith, he turned his face southward from Appomattox in April, 1865.

Think of him as ragged, half-starved, heavy-hearted, enfeebled by want and wounds, having fought to exhaustion, he surrenders his gun, wrings the hands of his comrades in silence, and lifting his tear-stained and pallid face for the last time to the graves that dot old Virginia's hills, pulls his gray cap over his brow and begins the slow and faithful journey. What does he find—let me ask you who went to your homes eager to find, in the welcome you had justly earned, full payment for four years' sacrifice—what does he find when, having followed the battle-stained cross against overwhelming odds, dreading death not half so much as surrender, he reaches the home he left so prosperous and beautiful?

He finds his house in ruins, his farm devastated, his slaves free, his stock killed, his barns empty, his trade destroyed, his money worthless, his social system, feudal in its magnificence, swept away; his people without law or legal status, his comrades slain, and the burdens of others heavy upon his shoulders. Crushed by defeat, his very traditions are gone. Without money, credit, employment, material or training, and,

besides all this, confronted with the gravest problem that ever met human intelligence,—the establishing of a status for the vast body of his liberated slaves.

What does he do—this hero in gray, with a heart of gold? Does he sit down in sullenness and despair? Not for a day. Surely, God who had stripped him of his prosperity, inspired him in his adversity. As ruin was never before so overwhelming, never was restoration swifter. The soldiers stepped from the trenches into the furrow; horses that had charged Federal guns marched before the plough; and the fields that ran red with human blood in April were green with the harvest in June. From the ashes left us in 1864, we have raised a brave and beautiful city. Somehow or other we have caught the sunshine in the bricks and mortar of our homes, and have builded therein not one ignoble prejudice or memory.

The old South rested everything on slavery and agriculture, unconscious that these could neither give nor maintain healthy growth. The new South presents a perfect democracy, the oligarchs leading in the popular movement—a social system compact and closely knitted, less splendid on the surface but stronger at the core; a hundred farms for every plantation, fifty homes for every palace, and a diversified industry that meets the complex needs of this complex age.

The new South is enamored of her new work. Her soul is stirred with the breath of a new life. The light of a grander day is falling fair upon her face. She is thrilling with a consciousness of a growing power and prosperity. As she stands upright, full-statured and equal among the people of the earth, breathing the keen air and looking out upon the expanding horizon, she understands that her emancipation came because, in the inscrutable wisdom of God, her honest purpose was crossed, and her brave armies were beaten.

This is said in no spirit of time-serving or apology. The South has nothing for which to apologize. She believes that the late struggle was war between the States and not rebellion, revolution and not conspiracy, and that her convictions were as honest as yours. I should be unjust to the dauntless spirit of the South and to my own conviction if I did not make this plain in this presence. The South has nothing to take back. In my native town of Athens is a monument that crowns its central hills—a plain, white shaft. Deep cut into its shining side is a name dear to me above the names of men, that of a brave, a simple man who died in a brave and simple faith. Not for all the glories of New England—from Plymouth Rock all the way—would I exchange the heritage he left me in his soldier's death. To the foot of that shaft I shall send my children's children to reverence him who ennobled their name with his heroic blood. But, sir, speaking from the shadow of that memory, which I honor as I do nothing else on earth, I say that the cause in which he suffered and for which he gave his life was adjudged by a higher and fuller wisdom than his or mine, and I am glad that the omniscient God held the balance of battle in His Almighty Hand, and that human slavery was swept forever from American soil—the American Union saved from the wreck of war.

This message, Mr. President, comes to you from consecrated ground. Every foot of the soil about the city in which I live is sacred as a battle-ground of the Republic. Every hill that invests it is hallowed to you by the blood of your brothers who died for your victory, and doubly hallowed to us by the blood of those who died hopeless, but undaunted, in defeat—sacred soil to all of us, rich with memories that make us purer

and stronger and better, silent but staunch witnesses in its red desolation of the matchless valor of American hearts and the deathless glory of American arms—speaking an eloquent witness, in its white peace and prosperity, to the indissoluble union of American States and the imperishable brotherhood of the American people.

Now, what answer has New England to this message? Will she permit the prejudice of war to remain in the hearts of the conquerors when it has died in the hearts of the conquered? Will she transmit this prejudice to the next generation, that in their hearts which never felt the generous ardor of conflict it may perpetuate itself? Will she withhold, save in strained courtesy, the hand which, straight from his soldier's heart, Grant offered to Lee at Appomattox? Will she make the vision of a restored and happy people, which gathered about the couch of your dying captain, filling his heart with grace, touching his lips with praise, and glorifying his path to the grave—will she make this vision on which the last sigh of his expiring soul breathed a benediction, a cheat and a delusion?

If she does, the South, never abject in asking for comradeship, must accept with dignity its refusal; but if she does not refuse to accept in frankness and sincerity this message of good-will and friendship, then will the prophecy of Webster, delivered in this very society forty years ago amid tremendous applause, be verified in its fullest sense, when he said "Standing hand in hand and clasping hands, we should remain united as we have been for sixty years, citizens of the same country, members of the same government, united, all united now and united forever."[1]

[1]See Webster: *Before the New England Society* (1850) in *Works of Webster* (1853) II, 517-528; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) III, 365-374.

Historical Setting of Grady's Speech on the South and Her Problems

The speech by Henry W. Grady at Dallas, Texas, on *The South and Her Problems,* completed the work, begun two years before in New York, of making permanent Grady's nation-wide reputation for eloquence of the highest order.

This speech, delivered at the Texas State Fair, during the presidential campaign of 1888, on October 26, just eleven days before the exciting contest closed, was, like all of Grady's subsequent speeches, a continuation and elaboration of his address on *The New South,* delivered before the New England Society of New York City.

Coming, as it did, at the very height of the campaign, this speech, by the ablest Southern orator, shows clearly the tense feeling of the South toward the outcome of the struggle between Cleveland and Harrison for the presidency. In the North, the chief issue between Republicans and Democrats was on the tariff; but, in the South, the chief issue was whether the white, or the black, race should be dominant in politics.

"Not in twenty years," said Grady, "have we seen a day so pregnant with fate to this section as the 6th of next November. If President Cleveland is then defeated, which God forbid, I believe these States will be led through sorrows compared to which the woes of Reconstruction will be as the fading dews of morning to the roaring flood. To dominate these States through the colored vote, with such aid as Federal patronage may debauch or Federal power determine, and thus through its chosen instruments perpetuate its rule, is in my opinion the settled purpose of the Republican party; and I am appalled when I measure the passion in which this negro problem is judged by the leaders of that party."

With very good reason, too, Grady feared the purpose of

the Republicans; for, ever since the Republican defeat of 1884, responsible leaders of that party had been fulminating against the extra-legal methods employed in the South for undoing Reconstruction and for disfranchising the Republican negro vote.

These methods, Elson, the historian, describes by saying that "the process of undoing Reconstruction began with the downfall of the carpetbag governments; continued for more than thirty years; and resulted in the complete restoration of the whites to power throughout the South. The first stage in this process was marked by violence and disorder in the extreme, the most prominent feature being the work of the Ku Klux. This condition led Congress to pass the *Enforcement Act* of 1870, the *Ku Klux Act* of 1871, and an additional *Civil Rights Bill* in 1875. There were also *Federal Election Acts* passed in 1871 and 1872. But in spite of all this, every Southern State that had seceded turned Democratic, beginning with Tennessee in 1869 and ending with Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina in 1877. But as violence in the South against the black voter always awakened an outcry from the North, a new plan was inaugurated about 1877, which marks the beginning of the second stage of the undoing of Reconstruction. During this period, which continued till 1890, the whites kept control chiefly by sharp practice, such as gerrymandering and ballot-box juggling, by which the ignorant blacks were easily managed."

"All sorts of devices were employed," says Elson, quoting from an article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, by Professor W. A. Dunning. "Sometimes the negroes were obliged to travel thirty or forty miles to vote, where rivers without bridges were to be crossed, and all ferries would be tied up on election

day. In one town where a poll tax was required, and the Republicans had furnished hundreds of negroes with tax receipts for a certain election, the Democrats managed to have a circus in town on election day, and arranged to have tax receipts accepted for admission. The election booth was deserted by the blacks, while the circus was crowded."

Chagrined by their late defeat in the national elections, Republican leaders, like John Sherman and William McKinley in Ohio, and Henry Cabot Lodge in Massachusetts, were loud in their protest against negro disfranchisement. When, however, William Tecumseh Sherman, a man cordially hated throughout the South, added his protest, it was almost too much for the South to bear.

During the campaign of 1888, General Sherman stirred to fury the whole South by his printed statement, that "the negro must be allowed to vote, and his vote must be counted; otherwise, so sure as there is a God in Heaven, you will have another war, more cruel than the last, when torch and dagger will take the place of the muskets of well-ordered battalions. Should the negro strike that blow, in seeming justice there will be millions to assist them."

This statement, from the man who desolated Georgia with fire and sword, roused in Grady a sense of deep resentment, and led him to accept the invitation to become the spokesman of Southern Democracy at the Dallas (Texas) State Fair.

After the most elaborate and painstaking preparation, which was irksome to Grady's genius, he boarded a special car at Atlanta on the train for Dallas, and began a journey that proved to be one long and continuous ovation at every station on the route. In Dallas, however, a grand climax was reached by the spontaneous enthusiasm of his reception. As Joel

Chandler Harris says, "some sort of program had been arranged by a committee, but the crowds trampled on this, and the affair took the shape of an American hullaballoo."

Though every other feature of the program was tossed to the winds, the speech-making was fully carried out; and it is said that "the young editor completely captured the vast crowd that had assembled to hear him." Throwing away his prepared speech, except so far as certain passages seemed to fit the inspiration of the moment, Grady announced his purpose to speak bluntly and vigorously on the question of what the South should do to be saved: first, in respect to the race problem; and second, in respect to the no less unique and important industrial problem. Confessing his ardent love for the negro race, which no Northern man could comprehend, Grady then proceeded to declare that, whereas the negro should be given every right civil and political, by the solid vote of the white race he should never be allowed to dominate again the government of the South. To save the South for the nation, however, Grady contended that not only the race problem must be solved, but so also must be the problem of freeing the South from the tyranny of "King Cotton" by diversifying Southern industry.

With the subtle mastery of consummate eloquence, Grady pictured for his hearers the loyalty of Southern slaves during the Civil War compared with the vicious system of negro government after the war; and then speaking of the indelible line that God had drawn between the races, he invoked the divine law that Anglo-Saxon blood should always dominate, and that, under the threat of Northern bayonets to support negro rule, the Anglo-Saxon should never yield nor hesitate to do his duty.

By far the most glowing picture that Grady drew, however, was in his peroration, when he compared the prostrate South

to a wounded soldier lying on the battlefield at night among the dead, being sought out by the light of the glimmering surgeon's lantern, at first given up as beyond hope, and then carried in on a stretcher to the hospital on the desperate chance that, if he survived till the morrow's sundown, he might be saved.

This, said Grady, was precisely the plight in which the South found itself, and only by its own effort, assisted by God's providence, could it be saved.

Addressed to Southerners in the throes of a great struggle to save the only ray of hope that had come to them since the Civil War in the Democratic administration of Cleveland, it is easy to see how this speech moved its hearers to run through the whole gamut of human emotions. Perhaps, it was not needed to hold together the Solid South, but Grady knew that it would be heard throughout the nation; and so it was, creating everywhere a better understanding of the Southern problem. Though it could not change the result of the election, it opened the door to Grady for many a future triumph and contributed largely to the peaceful solution of problems that it touched.

Henry W. Grady: The South and Her Problems

October 26, 1888

I am glad that I can speak a few words to the young men of Texas. Men, especially young men, look back for their inspirations to what is best in their traditions. Thermopylae cast Spartan sentiment in heroic mold and sustained Spartan arms for more than a century. Thermopylae had survivors to tell the story of its defeat. The Alamo had none. Though voiceless, it shall speak from its dumb walls. Liberty cried out to Texas, as God called from the clouds unto Moses.

Bowie and Fannin, though dead, still live. Their voices rang above the din of Goliad and the glory of San Jacinto, and they marched with the Texas veterans who rejoiced at the birth of Texas independence. It is the spirit of the Alamo that moved above the Texas soldiers as they charged like demigods through a thousand battlefields, and it is the spirit of the Alamo that whispers from their graves held in every State of the Union, ennobling their dust, their soil, that was crimsoned with their blood.

In the spirit of this inspiration and in the thrill of the amazing growth that surrounds you, my young friends, it will be strange if the young men of Texas do not carry the lone star into the heart of the struggle. The South needs her sons to-day more than when she summoned them to the forum to maintain her political supremacy, more than when the bugle called them to the field to defend issues put to the arbitrament of the sword. Her old body is instinct with appeal calling on us to come and give her fuller independence than she has ever sought in field or forum. It is ours to show that, as she prospered with slaves, she shall prosper still more with freemen; ours to see that, from the lists she entered in poverty, she shall emerge in prosperity; ours to carry the transcending traditions of the old South from which none of us can in honor or in reverence depart, unstained and unbroken into the new.

Shall we fail? Shall the blood of the old South—the best strain that ever uplifted human endeavor—that ran like water at duty's call and never stained where it touched—shall this blood that pours into our veins through a century luminous with achievement, for the first time falter and be driven back from irresolute heart, when the old South, that left us a better heritage in manliness and courage than in broad and rich acres, calls us to settle problems?

A soldier lay wounded on a hard-fought field; the roar of the battle had died away, and he rested in the deadly stillness of its aftermath. Not a sound was heard as he lay there, sorely smitten and speechless, but the shriek of wounded and the sigh of the dying soul, as it escaped from the tumult of earth into the unspeakable peace of the stars. Off over the field flickered the lanterns of the surgeons with the litter bearers, searching that they might take away those whose lives could be saved and leave in sorrow those who were doomed to die with pleading eyes through the darkness. This poor soldier watched, unable to turn or speak as the lantern drew near. At last the light flashed in his face, and the surgeon, with kindly face, bent over him, hesitated a moment, shook his head, and was gone, leaving the poor fellow alone with death. He watched in patient agony as they went from one part of the field to another.

As they came back, the surgeon bent over him again: "I believe if this poor fellow lives to sundown to-morrow, he will get well," and again leaving him, not to death but with hope; all night long these words fell into his heart as the dew fell from the stars upon his lips, "If he but lives till sundown, he will get well."

He turned his weary head to the east and watched for the coming sun. At last the stars went out, the east trembled with radiance, and the sun, slowly lifting above the horizon, tinged his pallid face with flame. He watched it inch by inch as it climbed slowly up the heavens. He thought of life, its hopes and ambitions, its sweetness and its raptures, and he fortified his soul against despair until the sun had reached high noon. It sloped down its slow descent, and his life was ebbing away and his heart was faltering, and he needed stronger stimulants to make him stand the struggle until the end of the day had come. He thought of his far-off home,

the blessed house resting in tranquil peace with the roses climbing to its door, and the trees whispering to its windows and dozing in the sunshine, the orchard and the little brook running like a silver thread through the forest.

"If I live till sundown, I will see it again. I will walk down the shady lane; I will open the battered gate, and the mocking bird shall call to me from the orchard, and I will drink again at the old mossy spring."

And he thought of the wife who had come from the neighboring farmhouse and put her hands in his, and brought sweetness to his life and light to his home.

"If I live till sundown, I shall look once more into her deep and loving eyes and press her brown head once more to my aching breast."

And he thought of the old father, patient in prayer, bending lower and lower every day under his load of sorrow and old age.

"If I but live till sundown, I shall see him again and wind my strong arm about his feeble body, and his hands shall rest upon my head while the unspeakable healing of his blessing falls into my heart."

And he thought of the little children that clambered on his knees and tangled their little hands into his heartstrings, making to him such music as the world shall not equal or heaven surpass.

"If I live till sundown, they shall again find my parched lips with their warm mouths, and their little fingers shall run once more over my face."

And he then thought of his old mother, who gathered these children about her and breathed her old heart afresh in their brightness and attuned her old lips anew to their prattle, that she might live till her big boy came home.

"If I live till sundown, I will see her again, and I will rest

my head at my old place on her knees, and weep away all memory of this desolate night." And the Sun of God, who died for men, bending from the stars, put the hand that had been nailed to the cross on the ebbing life and held on the stanch until the sun went down and the stars came out and shone down in the brave man's heart and blurred in his glistening eyes, and the lanterns of the surgeons came and he was taken from death to life.

The world is a battlefield strewn with the wrecks of government and institutions, of theories and of faiths, that have gone down in the ravage of years. On this field lies the South, sown with her problems. Upon this field swing the lanterns of God. Amid the carnage walks the Great Physician. Over the South He bends. "If ye but live until to-morrow's sundown, ye shall endure, my countrymen." Let us, for her sake, turn our faces to the east and watch as the soldier watched for the coming sun. Let us stanch her wounds and hold steadfast. The sun mounts the skies. As it descends, let us minister to her and stand constant at her side for the sake of our children and of generations unborn that shall suffer if she fails. And when the sun has gone down and the day of her probation has ended and the stars have rallied her heart, the lanterns shall be swung over the field and the Great Physician shall lead her up from trouble into content, from suffering into peace, from death to life.

Historical Setting of Grady's Speech on the Solid South

Grady was once introduced to an admiring audience as the "most consummate optimist" of all the Southern leaders who were active in the building-up of a New South; and much needed was this optimism of his on the Thanksgiving Day of 1888 following Cleveland's recent defeat and Harrison's vic-

tory in the presidential election of that year, when the whole South was thrown into gloom by the result, which Grady attempted to lighten in his address on *The Solid South,* delivered to many thousands of Georgians and South Carolinians, at the Augusta Exposition, on the banks of the Savannah.

Though President Harrison had said, soon after his election, that the South should not suffer, but should prosper in his election, Grady found it hard to overlook the threat of General Sherman, that millions in the North would assist the negro, if he struck a blow with torch or dagger to maintain his voting privilege; and he found it still harder to overlook the sentiment expressed by certain Northern editors.

Especially was he incensed by an editorial in the Chicago *Tribune,* saying: "The trouble is, the blacks will not fight for themselves. White men, or Indians, situated as the negroes, would have made the rivers of the South run red with blood before they would submit to the usurpations and wrongs which the blacks passively endure. Oppressed by generations of slavery, the negroes are non-combatants. They will not shoot and burn for their rights."

This sentiment, he thought, was "unspeakable infamy," inviting the negroes of the South to "repeat the horrors of Haiti"; yet, on Thanksgiving Day, at the Augusta Exposition, he sought to discover a glimmering light of hope in the surrounding gloom, and to steel his Southern brethren, by an appeal for continued solidarity of the white vote, to meet the impending danger of a new negro domination.

Speaking on the theme of *The Solid South,* he declared that "the South is now confronted by two dangers: *First,* that, by remaining solid, it will force a permanent sectional alignment, under which, being in minority, it has nothing to gain and everything to lose; *second,* that, by dividing, it will debauch

its political system, destroy the defenses of its social integrity, and put the balance of power in the hands of an ignorant and dangerous class."

Admitting fully the evils involved in the first alternative, he went on to prove conclusively that the evils involved in the second were far worse. The North, he said, maintained that the negro vote was suppressed by violence or miscounted by fraud; but the truth of this charge in the last election he denied; and he insisted strongly that the South should be allowed to solve her own race problem without Federal interference. To this end, he appealed for a continuation of the Solid South, disparaging all efforts to drive a wedge between adherents of the Old, and the New, South, and imploring the grace of God to heal with His wisdom and His mercy the wounds of sectional strife.

Throughout this speech the reader of to-day finds the germs of thought and of expression that developed one year later in Grady's magnificent plea to a Boston audience on *The Race Problem of the South*—a speech that marked the brilliant climax of his career—but in this speech on *The Solid South,* there is one grand passage in defense of the old men of the South, that has no echo elsewhere in Grady's published works, and which alone would establish beyond peradventure Grady's exalted rank as an orator of the most sublime eloquence.

Henry W. Grady: The Solid South

November 29, 1888

In working out our civil, political, and religious salvation, everything depends on the union of our people. The man who seeks to divide them now in the hour of their trial, that man puts ambition before patriotism. A distinguished gentle-

man said that "certain upstarts and speculators were seeking to create a new South to the derision and disparagement of the old," and rebukes them for so doing. These are cruel and unjust words. It was Ben Hill—the music of whose voice hath not deepened, though now attuned to the symphonies of the skies—who said, "There was a South of secession and slavery—that South is dead; there is a South of Union and freedom—that South, thank God, is living, growing every hour."

It was he who named the New South, and one of the "upstarts" said in a speech in New York: "In answering the toast to the New South, I accept that name in no disparagement to the Old South. Dear to me, sir, is the home of my childhood and the traditions of my people, and not for the glories of New England history from Plymouth Rock all the way, would I surrender the least of these. Never shall I do, or say, aught to dim the luster of the glory of my ancestors, won in peace and war."

Where is the young man in the South who has spoken one word in disparagement of our past, or has worn lightly the sacred traditions of our fathers? The world has not equaled the unquestioning reverence and undying loyalty of the young man of the South to the memory of our fathers. History has not equaled the cheerfulness and heroism with which they bestirred themselves amid the poverty that was their legacy, and holding the inspiration of their past to be better than rich acres and garnered wealth, went out to do their part in rebuilding the fallen fortunes of the South and restoring her fields to their pristine beauty.

Wherever they have driven,—in the market-place, putting youth against experience, poverty against capital; in the shop, earning in the light of their forges and the sweat of their

faces the bread and meat for those dependent upon them; in the forum eloquent by instinct, able though unlettered; on the farm, locking the sunshine in their harvests and spreading the showers on their fields—everywhere my heart has been with them, and I thank God that they are comrades and countrymen of mine. I have stood with them shoulder to shoulder as they have met new conditions without surrendering old faiths—and I have been content to feel the grasp of their hands and the throb of their hearts, and hear the music of their quick step as they marched unfearing into new and untried ways.

If I should attempt to prostitute the generous enthusiasm of these my comrades to my own ambition, I should be unworthy. If any man, enwrapping himself in the sacred memories of the Old South, should prostitute them to the hiding of his weakness, or the strengthening of his failing fortunes, that man would be unworthy. If any man for his own advantage should seek to divide the old South from the new, or the new from the old,—to separate these that in love hath been joined together,—to estrange the son from his father's grave and turn our children from the monuments of our dead, to embitter the closing days of our veterans with suspicion of the sons who shall follow them,—this man's words are unworthy and are spoken to the injury of his people.

Some one has said in derision that the old men of the South, sitting down amid their ruins, reminded him "of the Spanish hidalgos sitting in the porches of the Alhambra." There is pathos, but no derision, in this picture to me. These men were our fathers. Their lives were stainless. Their hands were daintily cast, and the civilization they builded in tender and engaging grace hath not been equaled. The scenes amid which they moved, as princes among men, have vanished

forever. A grosser and more material day has come, in which their gentle hands can garner but scantily, and their guileless hearts fend but feebly. Let them sit, therefore, in the dismantled porches of their homes, into which dishonor hath never entered, to which discourtesy is a stranger—and gaze out to the sea, beyond the horizon of which their armada has drifted forever. And though the sea shall not render back for them the argosies that went down in their ships, let us build for them in the land they love so well a stately and enduring temple—its pillars founded in justice, its arches springing to the skies, its treasuries filled with substance; liberty walking in its corridors; art adorning its walls; religion filling its aisles with incense,—and here let them rest in honorable peace and tranquility until God shall call them hence to "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Historical Setting of Grady's Speech on the Farmer and the Cities

The eloquence of Henry W. Grady, like that of Robert G. Ingersoll, is filled with beautiful passages that are veritable prose-poems; and, nowhere, among his speeches, is this eloquence of poetic imagination more evident than in his address to a meeting of the Farmers' Alliance, on *The Farmer and the Cities,* delivered in the open air at Elberton, Georgia, in June, 1889. Yet this speech, so filled with poetic rhapsody, is not merely a fine piece of rhetoric: it is also one of his best political arguments and most subtly persuasive appeals for loyalty to the New South, and to the Solid South, in opposition to the centralizing tendencies of the entrenched Republican regime.

At the time this speech was delivered, the South, like the

Far West, was suffering from the poverty created by farm mortgages and consequent subserviency to Northern and Eastern bankers in New York and Boston; and, revolting against this condition, it had given birth to a vast secret and pledge-bound organization, known as the Southern Farmers' Alliance, which in co-operation with a similar organization in the North and West, was fast drifting into politics to form the Populist party in protest against the capitalistic tenets of both the Republican, and the Democratic, parties.

With the aspirations of the Farmers' Alliance to impose an income tax on colossal fortunes, to check the growth of trusts and monopolies, and to provide government loans for farmers, Grady had much sympathy; but he had no sympathy whatsoever with a movement that would split the Democratic party and destroy the Solid South, preferring rather to depend upon thrift and frugality in the home to restore among Southern farmers their old-time independence and prosperity.

This was, therefore, the message that he carried far and wide to Georgia farmers throughout the spring and summer of 1889; and this was the theme of his famous address delivered at the barbecue of farmers assembled from all over the county in which Elberton was situated.

Cleverly turning the farmers' argument into Democratic doctrine of hostility to Republican proposals for a high protective tariff and for extravagant pensions that would benefit only Northern veterans, he tactfully led his auditors to a consideration of homely remedies for their common ills in lieu of organizing a third party; and, therein, he gave to them, and to the world, an unsurpassed description of the comparative power residing in the marble halls of the nation's capital and in the humble homes of the people.

To Grady, this theme of home-life on the farm was most

alluring; for, as Joel Chandler Harris has said, it was a matter on which his mind loved to dwell. "There was that in his nature," said Harris, "to which both sun and soil appealed. The rain falling on a fallow field, the sun shining on the bristling and waving corn, and the gentle winds of heaven blowing over all—he was never tired of talking of these, and his talk always took the shape of a series of picturesque descriptions. He appreciated their spiritual essence as well as their material meaning, and he surrendered himself entirely to all the wholesome suggestions that spring from the contemplation of rural scenes."

During that very year, in fact, Grady's passion for country life had led him to commission one of the composers in his newspaper-office to purchase a farm for him; and, though his dream of being a gentleman-farmer was never realized, he took delight, nevertheless, in making romantic plans for this ideal farm. On this farm, there was to be "an old-fashioned spring in a clump of large oak-trees"; there were to be "meadows of orchard grass and clover, through which mild-eyed Jerseys were to wander at will"; and in front of the house, there was to be "a barley patch, gloriously green, and a colt frolicking and capering in it."

"The farm was a dream," says Harris, "but Grady, no doubt, got more enjoyment and profit out of it than a great many prosy people get out of the farms that are real. Insubstantial as it was, Mr. Grady's farm served to relieve the tension of a mind that was always busy with the larger affairs of this busy and stirring age; and, many a time, when he grew tired of the incessant demands on his time and patience, he would close the door of his room with a bang and instruct the office-boy to tell all callers that he had 'gone to his farm.' The fat cows that grazed there lowed their welcome, the

chickens cackled to see him come, and the colt capered nimbly in the green expanse of barley—children of his dreams all, but all grateful and restful to a busy mind."

For a man so constituted, it was easy to construct impromptu the idyllic description of a farmer's home that appears in his speech at Elberton. But, though this description is not equaled in modern literature for its effectiveness and pathos, according to the verdict of Joel Chandler Harris, himself a writer of fame on rural life; it is not the only claim of the speech at Elberton to eloquence of the highest order; for, judged by its effect, in an unbroken Solid South at the next election in 1892, when the crest of the wave in the Populist movement was attained, this speech proves that it had, not only a high literary value, but also a highly practical value in the realm of national politics as well.

Henry W. Grady: The Farmer and the Cities

June, 1889

Ladies and Gentlemen: There are serious problems that beset our State and our country that no man, facing, as I do this morning, a great and intelligent audience, can in honor or in courage disregard. I shall attempt to make no brilliant speech, but to counsel with you in plain and simple words, beseeching your attention and your sympathy as to the dangers of the present hour, and our duties and our responsibilities.

At Saturday noon in any part of this country you may note the farmer going from his field, eating his dinner thoughtfully, and then saddling his plow horse, or starting afoot and making his way to a neighboring church or schoolhouse. There he finds from every farm, through every footpath, his neighbors gathering to meet him. What is the object of this meeting?

It is not social, it is not frolic, it is not a picnic—the earnest, thoughtful faces, the serious debate and council, the closed doors and the secret session, forbid this assumption. It is a meeting of men who feel that in spite of themselves their affairs are going wrong; of free and equal citizens who feel that they carry unequal burdens; of toilers who feel that they reap not the just fruits of their toil; of men who feel that their labor enriches others while it leaves them poor, and that the sweat of their bodies, shed freely under God's command, goes to clothe the idle and the avaricious in purple and fine linen. This is a meeting of protest, of resistance. Here the farmer meets to demand, and organize that he may enforce his demand, that he shall stand equal with every other class of citizens; that laws discriminating against him shall be repealed; that the methods oppressing him shall be modified or abolished; and that he shall be guaranteed that neither government nor society shall abridge, by statute or custom, his just and honest proportion of the wealth he created, but that he shall be permitted to garner in his barns, and to enjoy by his hearthstone, the full and fair fruits of his labor.

The agricultural army of the Republic is in motion. The rallying drumbeat has rolled over field and meadow, and from where the wheat locks the sunshine in its bearded sheaf, and the clover carpets the earth, and the cotton whitens beneath the stars, and the tobacco catches the quick aroma of the rains,—everywhere that patient man stands above the soil, or bends over the furrow, the farmers are ready in squads and companies and battalions and legions to be led against what they hold to be an oppression that honest men would not deserve, and that brave men would not endure.

It will not do to say that this organization will pass away; for if the discontent on which it is based survives it, it had

better have lived and forced its wrongs to final issue. There is no room for divided hearts in this State, or in this Republic. If we shall restore Georgia to her former greatness and prosperity—if we shall solve the problems that beset the South in honor and safety—if we shall save this Republic from the dangers that threaten it—it will require the earnest and united effort of every patriotic citizen, be he farmer, or merchant, or lawyer, or manufacturer.

I believe the government can protect its citizens. It is of the people, and it shall not perish from the face of the earth. It can top off colossal fortunes, and, by an income tax, retard their growth. It can set a limit to personal and corporate wealth. It can take trusts and syndicates by the throat. It can shatter monopoly; it can equalize the burden of taxation; it can distribute its privileges impartially; it can clothe with credit its land now discredited at its banks; it can lift the burdens from the farmer's shoulders, give him equal strength to bear them—it can trust the people in whose name this Republic was founded; in whose courage it was defended; in whose wisdom it has been administered, and whose stricken love and confidence it cannot survive.

But the government, no matter what it does, does not do all that is needed, nor the most; that is conceded, for all true reform must begin with the people at their homes. A few Sundays ago I stood on a hill in Washington. My heart thrilled as I looked on the towering marble of my country's Capitol, and a mist gathered in my eyes as, standing there, I thought of its tremendous significance and the powers there assembled, and the responsibilities there centered—its President, its Congress, its courts, its gathered treasure, its army, its navy, and its sixty millions of citizens. It seemed to me the best and mightiest sight that the sun could find in its

wheeling course—this majestic home of a Republic that has taught the world its best lessons of liberty—and I felt that if wisdom and justice and honor abided therein, the world would stand indebted to this temple on which my eyes rested, and in which the ark of my covenant was lodged for its final uplifting and regeneration.

A few days later, I visited a country home. A modest, quiet house sheltered by great trees and set in a circle of field and meadow, gracious with the promise of harvest; barns and cribs were filled, and the old smokehouse odorous with treasure; the fragrance of pink and hollyhock mingling with the aroma of garden and orchard, and resonant with the hum of bees and poultry's busy clucking; inside the house, thrift, comfort, and that cleanliness that is next to godliness,—the restful beds, the open fireplace, the books and papers, and the old clock that had held its steadfast pace amid the frolic of weddings, that has welcomed in steady measure the newborn babes of the family, and kept company with the watchers of the sick bed, and had ticked the solemn requiem of the dead; and the well-worn Bible that, thumbed by fingers long since stilled, and blurred with tears of eyes long since closed, held the simple annals of the family, and the heart and conscience of the home.

Outside stood the master, strong and wholesome and upright; wearing no man's collar, with no mortgage on his roof, and no lien on his ripening harvest; pitching his crops in his own wisdom, and selling them in his own time in his chosen market; master of his lands and master of himself. Near-by stood his aged father, happy in the heart and home of his son. And as they started to the house, the old man's hands rested on the young man's shoulder, touching it with the knighthood of the fourth commandment, and laying there the unspeak-

able blessing of an honored and grateful father. As they drew near the door, the old mother appeared; the sunset falling on her face, softening its wrinkles and its tenderness, lighting up her patient eyes, and the rich music of her heart trembling on her lips, as in simple phrase she welcomed her husband and son to their home. Beyond was the good wife, true of touch and tender, happy amid her household cares, clean of heart and conscience, the helpmate and the buckler of her husband. And the children strong and sturdy, trooping down the lane with the lowing herd, or weary of simple sport, seeking, as truant birds do, the quiet of the old home nest.

And I saw the night descend on that home, falling gently as from the wings of the unseen dove. And the stars swarmed in the bending skies, the trees thrilled with the cricket's cry, the restless bird called from the neighboring wood, and the father, a simple man of God, gathering the family about him, read from the Bible the old, old story of love and faith, and then went down in prayer, the baby hidden amid the folds of its mother's dress, and closed the record of that simple day by calling down the benediction of God on the family and the home!

And as I gazed the memory of the great Capitol faded from my brain. Forgotten its treasure and its splendor. And I said, "Surely here—here in the homes of the people is lodged the ark of the covenant of my country. Here is its majesty and its strength. Here the beginning of its power and the end of its responsibility." The homes of the people; let us keep them pure and independent, and all will be well with the Republic. Here is the lesson our foes may learn—here is the work the humblest and weakest hands may do. Let us in simple thrift and economy make our homes independent. Let us in frugal industry make them self-sustaining. In sacrifice

and denial, let us keep them free from debt and obligation. Let us make them homes of refinement. Let us make them temples of liberty, and teach our sons that an honest conscience is every man's first political law; that his sovereignty rests beneath his hat, and that no splendor can rob him and no force justify the surrender of the simplest right of a free and independent citizen.

The home is the source of our national life. Back of the national Capitol and above it stands the home. Back of the President and above him stands the citizen. What the home is, this and nothing else will the Capitol be. What the citizen wills, this and nothing else will the President be.

Historical Setting of Grady's Speech on the Race Problem in the South

During the memorial exercises for Henry W. Grady at Macon, Georgia, one of the speakers gave expression to a sentiment concerning Grady's eloquence that is probably universally accepted throughout the South. "Since Appomattox," said this orator, "two historic speeches have been made by Southern men; the one was that delivered in Congress upon the proposition to strike from the general amnesty of the government the name of Jefferson Davis, when Benjamin H. Hill broke the knightliest lance ever shivered in a people's honor, full on the haughty crest of the 'plumed knight'; the other was the Boston speech of Mr. Grady, which, like a magic key, will yet unlock the shackles that have so long manacled a people, who, strangest paradox in history, were enslaved by the emancipation of their slaves. The logic of Hill was powerful as the club of Hercules; the eloquence of Grady was irresistible as the lyre of Orpheus."

This second great triumph of Southern eloquence to which the speaker referred was Grady's speech on *The Race Problem in the South* delivered in Boston, before the Merchants' Association of that city, on December 13, 1889, just ten days before his death, contracted from pneumonia as the result of exposure to cold in the Northern city.

Why the South felt as they did about this speech was due to the fact that, at this time, loyal leaders of the New South, struggling valiantly with a baffling race problem, were in sore need of a masterful and conciliatory spokesman to win sympathy at the North for their efforts to solve this problem without Federal interference; for, at the time this speech was delivered, the critical moment had arrived when Northern Republicans were threatening to enact another *Force Bill* to protect with bayonets the voting privilege of Southern negroes.

Since 1884, such a measure had been under contemplation, but only with assured Republican majorities in both Houses of Congress after the election of 1888 was it considered feasible. The Republican platform of that year had attributed the previous election of Cleveland and the former Democratic majorities in Congress to "the suppression of the ballot by a criminal nullification of the Constitution and the laws of the United States"; and, in March, 1889, as well as in December of the same year, President Harrison, by his inaugural, and by his first message to Congress, had called attention to the negro problem, saying of the Southern efforts to solve it: "Are they at work upon it? What solution do they offer? When will the black man cast a free ballot, and when will he have the civil rights that are his?"

Not only Northern politicians, but Northern editors also thought that some solution for this problem must be found at once. By the suppression of the negro vote, they claimed

that the Republicans had lost twenty-four seats in the House and thirty-eight votes in the Electoral College. Due to this same cause, they said, that in the South the vote of one white man was equivalent to the vote of five white men in the North; and they were especially bitter over the fact that, in 1886, it took only twenty-seven thousand votes to elect ten Congressmen from Georgia; whereas, in the same year, it took fifty-four thousand votes to elect one Congressman from Oregon.

Before the Civil War, they said the South received representation in Congress for the non-voting negroes as slaves on the basis that each negro was equivalent to two-thirds of a man; and now the South received representation for these same non-voting negroes as freemen on the basis that each negro was equivalent to a full man. Hence, by emancipation and by subsequent negro disfranchisement, the Southern whites, Democrats, and ex-Confederates, they claimed, had acquired a more unfair and disproportionate influence in national politics than they had wielded before the war; and, of course, these Northern editors raised the cry of *who won the war anyway?* —and would the North tamely submit to having the fruits of its victory stolen from under its very eyes?

Because of widespread public pressure in the North, therefore, President Harrison had urged in his message of December, 1889, that Congress should pass a *Federal Election Law* for Congressional districts; and this part of his message was referred for action to a committee of the House, over which Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts presided as chairman.

It was at this critical moment for the South, that Henry W. Grady received his invitation to appear in Boston, the home of Charles Sumner and Wendell Phillips, and there, before the Merchants' Association of that city, to present his views of the race problem in the South.

He knew that this invitation had been extended to him in consequence of his great triumph for conciliation three years before at the New England Society's meeting in New York; and he knew that, on this occasion, another great triumph was expected of him by all his friends throughout the North and South.

Being oppressed by the heavy responsibility that seemed to rest almost solely upon his shoulders, Grady undertook the preparation of this Boston speech with unwonted labor and thoroughness, in a manner that resembles Patrick Henry's preparation for his last great speech on *The British Debts Case*. Sending his servants away, Grady locked himself in his room, and would not tolerate interruption from any source, until at last he emerged with a speech, impressed upon his mind as he had penned it down, that was in form and substance worthy of the cause he had at heart.

Then boarding a train, with a bodyguard of eminent Georgians, anxious to hear his defense of the South, he journeyed, for the first time, into the very heart of New England, as an unofficial ambassador of the Solid South, which was ready to back him unanimously in all his efforts to bring about a better understanding in the North of the South's peculiar problem.

The citizens of Massachusetts received with every courtesy this Southern delegation; and, gathering about their banquet-table in Boston many of the eminent statesmen of New England, with ex-President Cleveland as an honored guest, they hailed with enthusiasm the brilliant spokesman of Southern Democracy.

Standing there, then, in the presence of this Boston audience, in the shadow of Bunker Hill, and within easy reach of Plymouth Rock,—where, before him, "Webster thundered and Longfellow sang, where Emerson thought and Channing

preached—in the cradle of American letters and almost of American liberty"—Grady appeared as the living impersonation of Southern statesmanship and Southern eloquence.

The speech he delivered on this occasion, in the halls of his adversaries, did exactly what Grady hoped it might do. Fulfilling perfectly the expectations of his friends at home, it "melted away the most hardened prejudice," so said a report in the Albany *Argus*—"and enkindled in the New England heart the spirit of respect and sympathy for the brave, single-minded people of the South, who are so patiently and determinedly working out their destiny to make their beautiful land the abode of unalloyed peace and prosperity."

In similar vein, the Boston *Globe* recorded its admiration for Grady's speech, when, it said after his death, that "only ten days ago, his fervid oratory rang out in a Boston banquet hall, and enchanted the hundreds of Boston's business men who heard it. . . . . His silvery speech and graphic imagery opened the minds of thousands of influential men of the North to a truer conception of the South; for he had shown them that the Old South was a memory only; and that the New South was a reality. He had done more than any other man to open the eyes of the North to the peerless natural advantages of his section, so that streams of capital began to flow southward to develop these resources."

Only the Boston *Advertiser* expressed a doubt of Grady's carrying conviction to his audience on the race question; but, as a Georgia paper said, Grady's words "had rung from Boston to San Francisco." The *Advertiser* may appear to have been right, when we examine history and find Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts pressing through the lower House of Congress, in the following June, the hated *Force Bill;* but the Georgia paper appears to have struck the truth more nearly,

when we find that this same *Force Bill* was defeated in the Senate by the suddenly acquired indifference of Senator George Frisbie Hoar of Massachusetts, and by the arguments of two Republican Senators from Pennsylvania, who followed precisely the reasoning advanced by Grady in his Boston speech.

The praise of an adversary, however, is the very highest praise; and even the Boston *Advertiser* was willing to say, that "the address, considered in all respects, was superior to that which he delivered in New York, and which won for him a national reputation. . . . . It rose far above the ordinary after-dinner speech, and the impression made by it is still strong. . . . . It was, in fact, one of the finest specimens of elegant and fervid oratory which this generation has heard."

This last statement is in complete accord with the judgment of Grady's friendly critic, Joel Chandler Harris, who says of the Boston speech, that "it was Grady's last, as it was his best, contribution to the higher politics of the country—the politics that are above partisanry and self-seeking. That speech," said he, "as it stands, reaches the high-water mark of modern oratory."

Henry W. Grady: The Race Problem in the South

December 13, 1889

Mr. President: Bidden by your invitation to a discussion of the race problem—forbidden by occasion to make a political speech—I appreciate in trying to reconcile orders with propriety the predicament of the little maid, who, bidden to learn to swim, was yet adjured, "Now, go, my darling, hang your clothes on a hickory limb, and don't go near the water."

The stoutest apostle of the church, they say, is the missionary, and the missionary, wherever he unfurls his flag, will

never find himself in deeper need of unction and address than I, bidden tonight to plant the standard of a Southern Democrat in Boston's banquet hall, and to discuss the problem of the races in the home of Phillips and of Sumner.

Three years ago, sir, I spoke some words in New York that caught the attention of the North. As I stand here to reiterate, as I have done everywhere, every word I then uttered —to declare that the sentiments I then avowed were universally approved in the South—I realize that the confidence begotten by that speech is largely responsible for my presence here tonight; and I should dishonor myself if I betrayed that confidence by uttering one insincere word or by withholding one essential element of the truth.

The President of the United States in his late message to Congress, discussing the plea that the South should be left to solve this problem, asks: "Are they at work upon it? What solution do they offer? When will the black man cast a free ballot? When will he have the civil rights that are his?"

I shall not here protest against the partisanry that, for the first time in our history in time of peace, has stamped with the great seal of our government a stigma upon the people of a great and loyal section, though I gratefully remember that the great dead soldier, who held the helm of state for the eight stormy years of Reconstruction, never found need for such a step; and though there is no personal sacrifice I would not make to remove his cruel and unjust imputation on my people from the archives of my country!

But, sir, backed by a record on every page of which is progress, I venture to make earnest and respectful answer to the questions that are asked. When will the black man cast a free ballot? When ignorance anywhere is not dominated by the will of the intelligent; when the laborer anywhere

casts a vote unhindered by his boss; when the vote of the poor anywhere is not influenced by the power of the rich; when the strong and the steadfast do not everywhere control the suffrage of the weak and shiftless—then and not till then will the ballot of the negro be free.

The negro can never control in the South, and it would be well if partisans in the North would understand this. It was just as certain that Virginia would come back to the unchallenged control of her white race as that the night should fade in the kindling glory of the sun. You may pass force bills, but they will not avail. You may surrender your own liberties to Federal election law; you may submit, in fear of a necessity that does not exist, that the very form of this government may be changed—this old State that holds in its charter the boast that "it is a free and independent commonwealth" —it may deliver its election machinery into the hands of the government it helped to create—but never, sir, will a single State of this Union, North or South, be delivered again to the control of an ignorant and inferior race. We wrested our State government from negro supremecy when the Federal drumbeat rolled closer to the ballot box and Federal bayonets hedged it deeper about than will ever again be permitted in this free government. But, sir, though the cannon of this Republic thundered in every voting district of the South, we still should find in the mercy of God the means and the courage to prevent its re-establishment!

I regret, sir, that my section, hindered with this problem, stands in seeming estrangement to the North. If, sir, any man will point out to me the path down which the white people of the South divided may walk in peace and honor, I will take that path though I take it alone—for at the end, and nowhere else, I fear is to be found the full prosperity of my section

and the full restoration of this Union. But, sir, if the negro had not been enfranchised, the South would have been divided and the Republic united.

What solution, then, can we offer for this problem? Time alone can disclose it to us. We simply report progress and ask your patience. If the problem be solved at all—and I firmly believe it will, though nowhere else has it been—it will be solved by the people most deeply bound in interest, most deeply pledged in honor to its solution. I had rather see my people render back this question rightly solved than to see them gather all the spoils over which faction has contended since Catiline conspired and Caesar fought.

Meantime we treat the negro fairly, measuring to him in the fullness the strong should give to the weak, and leading him in the steadfast ways of citizenship that he may no longer be the prey of the unscrupulous and the sport of the thoughtless. We open to him every pursuit in which he can prosper, and seek to broaden his training and capacity. We seek to hold his confidence and friendship, and to pin him to the soil with ownership, that he may catch in the fire of his own hearthstone that sense of responsibility the shiftless can never know. And we gather him into that alliance of intelligence and responsibility that, though it now runs close to racial lines, welcomes the responsible and intelligent of any race. By this course, confirmed in our judgment and justified in the progress already made, we hope to progress slowly but surely to the end.

The love we feel for that race you cannot measure nor comprehend. As I attest it here, the spirit of my old black mammy from her home up there looks down to bless, and through the tumult of this night steals the sweet music of her croonings as thirty years ago she held me in her black arms and led me

smiling into sleep. This scene vanishes as I speak, and I catch a vision of an old Southern home, with its lofty pillars, and its white pigeons fluttering down through the golden air. I see women with strained and anxious faces, and children alert yet helpless. I see night come down with its dangers and its apprehensions, and in a big homely room I feel on my tired head the touch of loving hands, now worn and wrinkled, but fairer to me yet than the hands of mortal man —as they lay a mother's blessing there while at her knees, the truest altar I yet have found, I thank God that she is safe in her sanctuary, because her slaves, sentinel in the silent cabin or guard at her chamber door, put a black man's loyalty between her and danger.

I catch another vision. The crisis of battle—a soldier struck, staggering, fallen. I see a slave, scuffling through the smoke, winding his black arms about the fallen form, reckless of the hurtling death, bending his trusty face to catch the words that tremble on the stricken lips, so wrestling meantime with agony that he would lay down his life in his master's stead. I see him by the weary bedside, ministering with uncomplaining patience, praying with all his humble heart that God will lift his master up, until death comes in mercy and in honor to still the soldier's agony and seal the soldier's life. I see him by the open grave, mute, motionless, uncovered, suffering for the death of him who in life fought against his freedom. I see him when the mound is heaped and the great drama of his life is closed, turn away and with downcast eyes and uncertain step start out into new and strange fields, faltering, struggling, but moving on, until his shambling figure is lost in the light of this better and brighter day. And from the grave comes a voice saying: "Follow him! Put your arms about him in his need, even as he put his about me. Be his

friend as he was mine." And out into this new world—strange to me as to him, dazzling, bewildering both—I follow! And may God forget my people when they forget these.

Whatever the future may hold for them—whether they plod along in the servitude from which they have never been lifted since the Cyrenian was laid hold upon by the Roman soldiers and made to bear the cross of the fainting Christ; whether they find homes again in Africa, and thus hasten the prophecy of the psalmist who said, "And suddenly Ethiopia shall hold out her hands unto God"; whether, forever dislocated and separated, they remain a weak people beset by stronger, and exist as the Turk, who lives in the jealousy rather than in the conscience of Europe; or whether in this miraculous Republic they break through the caste of twenty centuries and, belying universal history, reach the full stature of citizenship, and in peace maintain it—we shall give them uttermost justice and abiding friendship. And whatever we do, into whatever seeming estrangement we may be driven, nothing shall disturb the love we bear this Republic, or mitigate our consecration to its service.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

ORATIONS OF HENRY W. GRADY—Complete Speech-Texts.

1. Grady: The New South (1886)—See Harris's *Life, Works, and Speeches of Grady* (Memorial Volume, 1890), 83-93; Shurter's *Orations and Speeches of Grady* (1910), 7-22; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) VIII, 579-589; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921), 577-584.
2. Grady: *Plea for Prohibition* (1887)—See Shurter's *Orations and Speeches of Grady,* 98-133.
3. Grady: *The South and Her Problems* (1888)—See Harris, 94-120; Shurter, 23-64.
4. Grady: *The Solid South* (1888)—See Harris, 121-141; Shurter, 65-97.

5. Grady: *Against Centralization* (1889)—See Harris, 142-157; Shurter, 134-157.
6. Grady: *The Farmer and the Cities* (1889)—See Harris, 158-179; Shurter, 158-191.
7. Grady: *The Race Problem in the South* (1889)—See Harris, 180-198; Shurter, 192-220; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1903) II, 534-550; Shurter's *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory* (1906), 214-233; O'Neill's *Models of Speech Composition* (1921), 585-597.
8. Grady: *Plymouth Rock and Democracy* (1889)—See Harris, 199-207; Shurter (1910), 221-233.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Dewey's *National Problems;* Elson's *History of U. S.;* Lingley's *Since the Civil War;* Oberholtzer's *History of U. S. Since Civil War;* Paxson's *Recent History of U. S.;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Grady, Henry W.—See biographical sketches in Harris's *Grady;* Shurter's *Masterpieces of Modern Oratory; The Library of Southern Literature* (Atlanta, 1907); Fulton and Trueblood's *British and American Eloquence.*

Hill, Benjamin H.—See biographical sketches in Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of American Biography; The Library of Southern Literature.*

Lamar, Lucius Q. C.—See biographies by Mayes, and Galloway.

Stephens, Alexander H.—See biographies by Johnston and Browne, and Pendleton.

Toombs, Robert—See biography by Stovall.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Grady's *The New South*

I. What internal evidence is there that Grady was familiar with: (1) Gray's *Elegy,* Stanza 16; (2) the title of Alexander H. Stephens's historical work?
II. What is meant by: (1) Tammany Hall; (2) the battle-stained cross?
III. Who were: (1) Benjamin H. Hill; (2) Doctor Talmage?
IV. What is the story of: (1) the military campaigns around Atlanta in 1864; (2) Lee's surrender at Appomattox; (3) Grant's death?
V. What is the explanation of: (1) Hill's being in the vicinity of Tammany

Hall in 1866; (2) Webster's appeal for Union in the speech from which Grady quoted?

On Grady's *The South and Her Problems*

I. What internal evidence is there that Grady was familiar with: (1) *Exodus*, 24:15-18; (2) Ingersoll's *Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child;* (3) Ingersoll's *Vision of War?*

II. What is the story of: (1) Thermopylae; (2) the Alamo; (3) Goliad; (4) San Jacinto?

III. Who were: (1) Bowie; (2) Fannin?—See Appletons' *Cyclopaedia of Am. Biog.*

On Grady's *The Solid South*

I. What internal evidence is there that Grady was familiar with: (1) *Second Corinthians*, 5:1?

II. What is the Alhambra?

III. What is the story of the defeat of the Spanish Armada?—See Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World.*

On Grady's *The Farmer and the Cities*

I. What internal evidence is there that Grady was familiar with: (1) *Genesis*, 3:19; (2) *Exodus*, 39:27-29; (3) *First Kings*, 8:1-11; (4) *Chronicles*, 5:1-14; (5) Longfellow's *The Old Clock on the Stairs;* (6) Gray's *Elegy*, Stanza 8; (7) Longfellow's *Village Blacksmith*, Stanza 2, lines 6-8; (8) *Exodus*, 20:12; (9) Burns's *Cotter's Saturday Night*, Stanzas 12-17; (10) Garfield's *Nomination of Sherman;* (11) Ingersoll's *Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child;* (12) *Second Kings*, 6:8-18?

On Grady's *The Race Problem in the South*

I. What internal evidence is there that Grady was familiar with *Luke*, 23:26?

II. What were the dates of: (1) the death of Sumner; (2) the death of Phillips; (3) the President's message mentioned by Grady?

III. Who were: (1) the President of the United States; (2) the great dead soldier?

IV. What is the meaning of the statement concerning the certainty of Virginia's return to unchallenged control of the white race?

V. To what provision of the *Force Bill* does Grady make indirect reference?

VI. What were: (1) the conspiracy of Catiline—See Plutarch's *Lives;* (2) the spoils over which Caesar fought; (3) Cyrene; (4) Ethiopia?

VII. What indirect reference does Grady make to: (1) the Crimean War, the Treaty of San Stefano, and the Congress of Berlin—See Hazen's *Mod. European Hist.*, 543-550; (2) Liberia?

VIII. In what *Psalm* does the prophecy concerning Ethiopia occur?

Dictionary Studies from Henry W. Grady

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. abject 2. circumstance 3. complex 4. devastated 5. disparaging 6. feudal 7. ignoble 8. indissoluble 9. inscrutable 10. invests 11. oligarchs 12. omniscient 13. parole 14. pathos 15. statured 16. status 17. staunch

1. aftermath 2. arbitrament 3. carnage 4. demigods 5. duty 6. forum 7. lists 8. luminous 9. probation 10. stanch 11. unspeakable

1. argosies 2. armada 3. garner 4. grosser 5. guileless 6. heroism 7. hidalgos 8. pristine 9. salvation 10. symphonies

1. buckler 2. colossal 3. corporate 4. council 5. counsel 6. guaranteed 7. hearthstone 8. monopoly 9. trusts 10. syndicates

1. adjured 2. drama 3. imputation 4. influenced 5. mitigate 6. partisans 7. predicament 8. shambling 9. stigma 10. unction 11. unscrupulous

CHAPTER XVIII

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

Bryan's Place among Orators of the Era of Populist Revolt

For approximately three decades, between 1896 and 1925, William Jennings Bryan, the thrice nominated candidate of the Democratic party for the presidency, was one of the most conspicuous and powerful political and platform orators of America.

At first capturing the ear of the American public on the bitterly contested issue of the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1 during the campaign of 1896, he continued thereafter for years to provide the paramount issues in political campaigns and to direct public attention successfully to the problems of imperialism, anti-trust legislation, world-peace, prohibition, and Fundamentalism as opposed to Darwinian evolution.

Throughout the Rooseveltian era, throughout the Insurgent-Republican and Progressive revolt, and throughout the beginnings of Wilsonian Democracy, Bryan was conspicuous as an orator among the leaders of the Democratic party; but that period in which he stood almost without a rival in the field of political oratory was the middle of the decade of the nineties, when Cleveland was dethroned as the leader of the Democratic party and McKinley came into power as the standard-bearer of the Republicans.

William Jennings Bryan was always nominally a Democrat; but, at the outset, he was in reality a Populist; for, almost

without exception, he endorsed and upheld all the major doctrines for which that party stood. To understand the early oratory of Bryan, therefore, it is necessary to understand the history of the movement that culminated in the formation of the Populist party.

This party had its origin in the coalition of three important organizations known respectively as the Grangers, the Greenback party, and the Farmers' Alliance, which found their chief strength in the South and West, and which united in 1891 to force upon the nation a comprehensive program of radical reforms.

The Grange was a secret order founded in 1867 to combat the economic backwardness of farm life. It was opposed to the principle of a high tariff; it fought against so-called extortionate railway freight rates; and it proposed various measures to check the decline in wheat prices and the increase of farm mortgages.

The Greenback party, like the Grange, was the product of the post-war period of depression in agriculture. During the war, the country had been flooded with paper currency, that gave to the farms an unprecedented prosperity; but, when the war ceased and the government began to redeem its greenback paper currency, this artificially stimulated prosperity collapsed. Ready money almost disappeared from circulation in agricultural districts; and the Greenback party, composed largely of farmers, demanded the re-issuance of this form of legal tender in order that they might have some available means of transacting business.

Then, much like these other groups, was the Farmers' Alliance, with distinct branches in the North and South. This organization demanded the abolition of national banks, increased issues of greenbacks, the free coinage of silver, and

government ownership of all the means of transportation and intercourse.

When these three organizations united in 1891, at the time that Mr. Bryan first appeared in Congress, they had gained control of the legislatures of Kansas and Nebraska, and they held the balance of power in Illinois, Minnesota, and South Dakota.

In order to gain relief for the agricultural and mining communities of the West and South, this new party demanded the free coinage of silver; the abolition of national banks; an issue of gold and silver currency sufficient to permit the business of the country to be worked on a cash basis; the loan of money to the people at the rate of two per cent on the guarantee of agricultural crops; government ownership of railroads, canals, telegraphs, and telephones; a graduated income-tax; the direct election of Senators by the people; the adoption of the initiative and referendum; and the prohibition of the alien ownership of land.

Some parts of this program, after years of bitter conflict, have been enacted into law. Other parts probably never will be so enacted, and possibly never should be. In any case, however, there was no hope of enacting the entire program all at once. But, among these proposals, two became immediately the most outstanding issues of American politics in the middle of the last decade of the nineteenth century. These were: the proposal to establish the free and unlimited coinage of silver; and that other project, to distribute more fairly the burdens of society by establishing a graduated Federal income-tax.

Since 1878, there had been an authorized limited coinage of silver: first, under the *Bland-Allison Act,* which permitted the coinage, per month, of not less than two million dollars, and not more than four million dollars in silver; and second,

under the *Sherman Silver Law* of 1890, which ordered the coinage, per month, of four million dollars in silver. Now the demand came, that all limitations as to amount should be abolished; but President Cleveland was opposed to such a move; and, when the financial panic of 1893 developed, Cleveland, to help out the situation, secured the repeal of the *Sherman Law* altogether, thus forcing the country to accept gold as the sole standard of money values.

This act of Congress, prompted by a Democratic administration, aroused indignant protests from the Populist party and from the Silver wings of both the Republican, and the Democratic, parties.

Great as was the consternation over this matter, however, it was fully equaled by the disappointment and rage that followed the first vain efforts to secure a graduated Federal income-tax law. Such a measure was incorporated in the *Wilson-Gorman Tariff Act* of 1894; but this part of the tariff bill was immediately contested in the courts; and, by two five-to-four decisions of the Federal Supreme Court, on April 8, and May 20, 1895, it was declared unconstitutional.

Thus, two of the great issues were framed for the campaign of 1896, when Mr. Bryan received the nomination of the Democratic party, and of the Populist party, for the presidency. In the debates of Congress over the repeal of the *Sherman Law,* Mr. Bryan had taken a conspicuous part, and he had been one of the foremost advocates of the proposal for the Federal income-tax. He was, therefore, well qualified to make either of these issues paramount in the campaign; and taking that one, which could be most readily settled by legislation of Congress, he made the free-silver question the great issue of the campaign.

During the bitter contest that ensued, William Jennings

Bryan rose to be one of the foremost political orators of America. Arrayed against him were such orators as William Bourke Cockran for the Gold-Democrats, Robert G. Ingersoll for the Gold-Republicans, and Carl Schurz for the Independents favoring a gold standard; while with him were arrayed such speakers as Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado representing the Silver-Republicans, Richard P. Bland of Missouri, Governor John P. Altgeld of Illinois, Senator "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman of South Carolina, and Senator John W. Daniel of Virginia, representing the Silver-Democrats. But, among all these orators, he moved almost without a peer.

During the decade of the nineties, when Mr. Bryan enjoyed his pre-eminence as a political orator, such men as Horace Porter, Chauncey M. Depew, Henry W. Watterson, and Joseph H. Choate were also enjoying splendid reputations for great eloquence; but none of these men achieved such fame for swaying the masses as did the great standard-bearer of the Democratic party, who began his long career in statesmanship and oratory during the campaign of 1896 on the question of the free coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1.

The Life of William Jennings Bryan

William Jennings Bryan, the great spokesman of the masses in the militant young Democracy of the West, was, between Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson, the most dominating personality in the Democratic party—a man whose voice and presence were made familiar to all Americans for over a quarter of a century, on the stump, in political conventions, before Chautauquas, and in religious assemblies.

This noted speaker, who at first was called "the boy orator of the Platte," and afterwards the "peerless leader of Democ-

racy," and the "Great Commoner," was born in 1860 at Salem, Illinois. Educated at Illinois College, in Jacksonville, he acquired, even in his student days, an enviable reputation for eloquence; and, when graduated in 1881, he proceeded to study law at the Union College of Law in Chicago. Two years sufficed for this; and, in 1883, he began the practice of his profession in Jacksonville. He soon decided to go West, however; and, in 1887, he established a residence in Lincoln, Nebraska, where his success in law and politics won for him in 1890 an election to Congress, as a Democrat, representing an overwhelmingly Republican district.

At this time, the West was permeated with agrarian discontent that was coming to a head in the agitation of the Populist party; and Bryan, fully sympathizing with the new movement to check the growth of colossal fortunes by an income-tax, and to obtain relief for the poor farmer by the free coinage of silver, became its spokesman in the lower House of Congress.

He first attracted notice in that body by an eloquent speech in 1893 against the repeal of the *Sherman Silver Purchase Act* that had been passed in 1890. On this occasion, Rhodes, the historian, says, that he "so charmed his hearers by his attractive presence, pleasing manner of delivery, and clear, vibrant, and beautifully modulated voice, that the conventional limit of one hour for a speech was extended to unlimited time by unanimous consent."

At the completion of his second term, in the spring of 1895, it is safe to say, however, that Bryan was wholly unknown to the country-at-large. He failed of re-election to the lower House in 1894; and, in the following year, when he was a candidate for the Senate, he was also defeated by the Republican candidate, John M. Thurston, who subsequently won

distinction for his eloquence in pleading for intervention in Cuba, which meant war with Spain.

While out of office, however, in the year 1895, he was not idle. In June of that year he attended a conference at Memphis, Tennessee, the purpose of which was to organize the free-silver forces of the country. There he made a powerful speech; and then, following up this auspicious beginning, he set out to convert the masses of the people to his cause. Though he spoke in many different States, he devoted most of his energies to Nebraska with the object of securing a silver delegation to the Democratic National Convention at Chicago, in July, 1896. The result was that, in this fight against the Gold-Democrats, he became the most conspicuous political leader of his State.

At Chicago, he presented himself as the leader of his State's silver delegation; but he found that an opposing delegation of Gold-Democrats had already been received. Before his delegation could be seated, therefore, in the convention, it was necessary for him to win over the hostile committee on credentials. This he accomplished, however, by a remarkably persuasive plea; and, finding himself at last admitted to the floor, he was ready to take part in the debate on the party platform.

By an address, known as *The Cross of Gold Speech,* which has never been equaled in convention oratory for its dynamic effect, Bryan defeated a movement to remove the silver plank from the party platform, and created for himself such unbounded admiration, that the next day he was nominated with frenzied enthusiasm as his party's candidate for the presidency.

The campaign, which, before, had promised to be a dull one, soon developed into one of the most exciting canvasses in our nation's history. Bryan, himself, took the lead on the

stump; and, between July and November, he traveled eighteen thousand miles, through twenty-seven different States, visiting 477 cities and towns, and delivering altogether 592 campaign speeches.

Though failing of election, Bryan still remained the idol of his party; and again, in 1900, on a free-silver and anti-imperialism platform, he was his party's candidate. Defeated again, he was unable to rouse enthusiasm for himself or his principles in the Democratic Convention of 1904; but, after a long absence from the country in foreign travel, Bryan returned in 1906 to be received with acclamation, and in 1908 was given once more the nomination of his party on an anti-trust and government-regulation platform.

Three times Bryan failed to win the presidency for himself; but, by his manipulation of delegates in the Baltimore Convention of 1912, he is given credit for securing the nomination of Woodrow Wilson, who did succeed in winning the great prize. Because of this favor, and because of Bryan's undoubted leadership of a large faction in the Democratic party, Wilson rewarded him by making him Secretary-of-State; and, for two years, these two prominent Democrats worked out in harmony a program for developing international peace by treaties of compulsory arbitration.

In 1915, however, Wilson and Bryan came to the parting of the ways; for Bryan believed that Wilson's notes to Germany would provoke war, and Wilson could no longer approve Bryan's policy of peace-at-any-price. Bryan, therefore, was forced to resign; and, henceforth, his political influence was to be felt only in the deliberations of the Democratic Conventions: at San Francisco, in 1920, as the advocate of peace and prohibition; and at New York, in 1924, as the opponent of Wall Street and the advocate of harmony between the McAdoo

faction representing the South and West, and the Smith faction representing the North and East.

In 1924, Bryan's race was nearly run, but in the summer of the following year, when he died at Dayton, Tennessee, he suddenly burst forth again into world-wide prominence by his connection with the Scopes trial, which was held in Tennessee to determine whether the law of that State forbidding the teaching of evolution in the public schools could be enforced. Bryan was engaged as a special prosecutor in this case, and was forced to meet in debate one of the most successful criminal lawyers of the country, Clarence S. Darrow of Chicago. Day after day, he withstood the tremendous strain of the contest; and then, when Mr. Darrow had out-maneuvred him, so that it was impossible for him to deliver the speech he had prepared, he finally succumbed to the excessive demands that were made upon his physical strength.

Amid the widespread lamentations of the conservative religious people of Tennessee, Bryan died on July 26, 1925.

Few orators have commanded greater admiration for their eloquence than has Bryan, and few have been permitted to come so near to ultimate victory in seeking their highest goal without attaining it. Yet Bryan's oratory was not wholly in vain; for, during his lifetime his appeal for popular government met a widespread response; his insistence upon the peaceful settlement of international disputes gained many adherents; and his views upon the prohibition question were written into law.

Many addresses made by William Jennings Bryan, such as his speech on *America's Mission* in 1899, his acceptance speech on *Imperialism* in 1900, his *Madison Square Speech* in 1906, and his lecture on *The Prince of Peace,* delivered literally hundreds of times, have contributed to his fame for eloquence;

but, when his whole career as an orator is reviewed by the future historian, no triumph of his eloquence will outrank the dazzling splendor of his achievement in obtaining, by his *Cross of Gold Speech* in 1896, the nomination of the Democratic party for the presidency of the United States.

In summing up the achievements of Mr. Bryan, Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska has said: "Although a private citizen, Bryan influenced the politics of his country as perhaps no other man of his time had done. As a layman, he has taught the lessons of the Holy Bible, as he understood them, to a larger congregation than any minister or priest of our age. . . . . The power of his great influence was his eloquence. In that respect he had but few equals in the history of the world. His greatness in this respect often caused admiring followers to be enthralled in an admiration of enthusiasm which led them to go contrary to the dictates of reason and logic. . . . . He could picture the wrongs of suffering people as they had never been portrayed before. . . . . He could outline remedies that moved millions of his countrymen to enthusiastic support, even though premeditated reason would later show the fallacy of his proposition. And when time had shown that some of his remedies would not stand the test of reason, his mighty eloquence took the same citizenship over to enthusiastic support of other remedies which again in time failed to meet the test."

"Our history," said another writer, "has no parallel for Bryan. The nearest historical comparison is with Henry Clay, the beloved 'Mill Boy of the Slashes,' thrice a presidential candidate, an orator who swayed men's minds and emotions with his silvery tongue as Bryan was to stir them half a century later. But there the parallel ends. Bryan, Puritan and prophet of the people, stands alone."

Always the "Great Commoner," always the incomparable spokesman for the masses, the foe of militarism and of alcoholism, the champion of Democracy and Orthodoxy, Bryan will go down in history as the "boy orator of the Platte" and the "idol of the West."

Historical Setting of Bryan's Cross of Gold Speech

The Cross of Gold Speech by Bryan in Chicago at the National Democratic Convention of 1896 is universally recognized as the greatest triumph of convention oratory in American history. Only twice before had similar eloquence produced such astounding results in elevating its author to permanent fame: the first instance being that of *The Plumed Knight Speech* by Ingersoll in 1876; and the second being Garfield's *Nomination of Sherman* in 1880, which resulted in the choice of Garfield himself for the coveted honor. Greater than either of these two preceding speeches, however, Bryan's effort at Chicago displayed all the brilliancy of style exhibited by Ingersoll, combined with the soothing and stimulating effect of Garfield's eloquence, which, as in the case of Garfield, made him the "dark-horse" nominee of his party in that year, and created such unbounded admiration for him that twice again in 1900 and in 1908, he was acclaimed by subsequent conventions as "the peerless leader of Democracy."

This speech by Bryan was delivered on the third day of the convention, July 9, 1896, when the Committee on Resolutions had reported a platform that declared the paramount issue to be the money question. Mono-metallism, it declared to be a British policy, the adoption of which had brought all other nations into servitude to London. "We demand," said this platform, "the free and unlimited coinage of both silver and gold at the present ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation."

In the making of this platform, a majority of the committee had studiously avoided any word of approbation for President Cleveland; and the condemnation of every policy with which he had been identified was a clear indication of their intent to repudiate him. A minority of sixteen on the committee resented such action, however, and protested against some declarations in the platform as "wholly unnecessary"; against others as "ill-considered and ambiguously phrased"; and against still others as "extreme and revolutionary."

To bring their protest forcibly before the convention, the minority, therefore, offered a substitute for the silver plank, saying that "any attempt of the United States alone to establish free silver would imperil national finances and injure commerce and industry"; and, coupled with this, they offered another plank commending Cleveland's administration.

No sooner were these two reports before the convention, than Senator Tillman of South Carolina, known as "Pitchfork" Tillman, leaped upon the platform. To praise Cleveland was to him like waving a red rag to a bull. All on fire with rage and hatred, this old-time fire-eater began to denounce with clenched fists and hissing words the substitute resolutions of the minority. Pacing up and down the platform like a raving madman, Tillman, with his dark, savage features, his face flushed, and his hair unkempt, seemed the impersonation of the mob spirit. So excited was he that at times his speech became unintelligible; and, when he had finished amid an uproar, only a few, who had heard him, knew what he had said.

To combat this utterance, Senator David A. Hill of New York then spoke in behalf of the minority report. With face ashen-white and a manner that was glacial, he said to the howling mob—"I am a Democrat, but I am not a revolutionist." Preferring reason to passion, he spoke in a cold and

argumentative style, which might have been convincing in a deliberative body, but unfortunately this convention was not worthy of that name. So great was the excitement and uproar that prevailed among the surging mass of frantic delegates there assembled, that not one word of Hill's could take effect. The convention simply would not listen to him, nor to Vilas of Wisconsin, nor to Russell of Massachusetts, who tried in vain to be heard.

It then became the privilege of William Jennings Bryan to close the debate against the plank offered by the minority repudiating free silver. "Such an opportunity to close a debate had never come to me before," he said at a later time, "and I doubt if as good an opportunity had ever come to any other person during this generation."

"Until then," says Peck in his *Twenty Years of the Republic,* "there had spoken no man to whom that riotous assembly would listen with respect. But, at this moment, there appeared upon the platform, Mr. William J. Bryan of Nebraska, who came forward to reply to the three preceding speakers. As he confronted the twenty thousand yelling, cursing, shouting men before him, they felt at once that indescribable, magnetic thrill which beasts and men alike experience in the presence of a master. Serene and self-possessed, and with a smile upon his lips, he faced the roaring multitude with a splendid consciousness of power. Before a single word had been uttered by him, the pandemonium sank to an inarticulate murmur and when he began to speak, even this was hushed to the profoundest silence. A mellow, penetrating voice that reached, apparently without the slightest effort, to the farthest recesses of that enormous hall, gave utterance to a brief exordium.

"In his first three sentences he had won his auditors. The

repose and dignity of his manner, the courteous reference to his opponents, and the perfect clearness and simplicity of his language riveted the attention of every man and woman in the convention hall."

His speech, so says an article in the *Review of Reviews,* was "almost destitute of argument. With consummate shrewdness, he declined to defend his own position, but plunged boldly to the attack. . . . The friends of silver, he declared, would no longer plead nor beg for justice, but came to demand and defy. His graphic pictures of existing commercial distress, which he laid at the door of gold monometallism, and his impassioned defense of the intelligence, the patriotism, and the rights of the masses of the people swept all before him."

When he borrowed the sentiment of Patrick Henry's speech on *Liberty or Death,* and declared, in reply to the gold advocates, that "we beg no longer, we entreat no more, we petition no more; we defy them!"—he created as profound an impression as that made by the Virginian orator of 1775. In words that must have been borrowed from Wirt's account of Henry's triumph, Peck describes the effect of this utterance. "The great hall," he said, "seemed to rock and sway with the fierce energy of the shout that ascended from twenty-thousand throats. . . . The leaderless Democracy of the West was leaderless no more. In that very moment, and in that burst of applause, it was acclaiming its new chief."

"The scene enacted in the convention," according to Peck's account, "as Bryan finished speaking was indescribable. Throughout the latter part of his address, a crash of applause had followed every sentence; but now the tumult was like that of a great sea thundering against the dykes. Twenty thousand men and women went mad with enthusiasm. The

orator had met their mood to the very full. He had found magic words for the feeling which they had been unable to express. And so he had played at will upon their very heart-strings, until the full tide of their emotion was let loose in one tempestuous roar of passion, which seemed to have no end."

After this speech, it was almost impossible to restore order, but when a partial semblance of quiet prevailed, the convention voted down the minority report with cries of derision, and adopted the majority's wishes for a silver platform by a vote of 628 to 301.

The next day, the convention nominated Bryan as its candidate for the presidency. The result was hailed by the West with immense enthusiasm; by the South with doubtful approbation; and by the East with anger and dismay. Over some of the offices of Democratic newspapers in the East, flags were hoisted at half-mast; and the New York *World* said that "lunacy having dictated the platform, it was perhaps natural that hysteria should evolve the candidate."

In contrast with this Eastern view, however, the Western view was expressed exactly by the words of the speaker who nominated Bryan in the convention. According to this viewpoint, he was "that young giant of the West, that friend of the people, that champion of the lowly, that apostle and prophet of this great crusade for financial reform—a new Cicero to meet the new Catilines of to-day—to lead the Democratic party, the defender of the poor, and the protector of the oppressed, which this day sends forth tidings of great joy to all the toiling millions of this over-burdened land."

Seldom has mere eloquence produced such a tremendous upheaval; and the result seems strange, indeed, when we learn that, for years, Bryan had been giving the substance of this

same speech on the stump and at the cross-roads. It is said, in fact, that his most telling phrase—"You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns; you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold"—was one that he had used with effect several times before during the preceding year and had saved to use when some great opportunity arose.

Those who read Bryan's speech in the newspapers of the next day wondered what there was in it to carry conviction to the hearts of so great an audience. Certainly it was not the argument involved; for there was none. It served its purpose, because it was the beautiful, the harmonious, the heroic expression of the overwhelming passion of the hour. It was the almost unprecedented and perfect combination of "the man, the subject, and the occasion." As such, this speech by Bryan will long be remembered as the greatest triumph of convention oratory in modern times.

William J. Bryan: The Cross of Gold Speech

July 9, 1896

We have assembled here under as binding and solemn instructions as were ever imposed upon the representatives of the people. We do not come as individuals. It is not a question of persons; it is a question of principles, and it is not with gladness, my friends, that we find ourselves brought into conflict with those who are now arrayed on the other side.

The gentleman who preceded me spoke of the State of Massachusetts, but we stand here representing people who are the equals before the law of the greatest citizens in the State of Massachusetts. When you come before us and tell us that we are about to disturb your business interests, we reply that you have disturbed our business interests by your course.

We say to you that you have made the definition of a business man too limited in its application. The man who is employed for wages is as much a business man as his employer; the attorney in a country town is as much a business man as the corporation counsel in a great metropolis; the merchant at the cross-roads store is as much a business man as the merchant of New York; the farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all day—who begins in the spring and toils all summer—and who by the application of brain and muscle to the natural resources of the country creates wealth, is as much a business man as the man who goes upon the board of trade and bets upon the price of grain; the miners who go down a thousand feet into the earth, or climb two thousand feet upon the cliffs, and bring forth from their hiding places the precious metals to be poured into the channels of trade are as much business men as the few financial magnates who, in a back room, corner the money of the world. We come to speak for this broader class of business men.

Ah, my friends, we say not a word against those who live upon the Atlantic coast, but the hardy pioneers who have braved all the dangers of the wilderness, who have made the desert to blossom as the rose—the pioneers away out there who rear their children near to nature's heart, where they can mingle their voices with the voices of the birds—these people, we say, are as deserving of the consideration of our party as any people in this country. It is for these that we speak. We do not come as aggressors. Our war is not a war of conquest; we are fighting in defense of our homes, our families, and posterity. We have petitioned and our petitions have been scorned; we have entreated and our entreaties have been disregarded; we have begged and they have mocked when our calamity came. We beg no longer; we entreat no more; we petition no more. We defy them.

There are two ideas of government. There are those who believe that, if you only legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, their prosperity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea, however, has been that, if you legislate to make the masses prosperous, their prosperity will find its way up through every class which rests upon them.

You come to us and tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave your farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.

My friends, we declare that this nation is able to legislate for its own people on every occasion, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation on earth; and, upon that issue, we expect to carry every State in the Union. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: "You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns; you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold."

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1. William J. Bryan: *On the Tariff* (1892)—See *Speeches of Bryan* (1909) I, 3-77.
2. William J. Bryan: *On Repeal of the Sherman Silver Law* (1893)—See ibid., I, 146-158.
3. William J. Bryan: *On the Income Tax* (1894)—See ibid., I, 159-179; Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) I, 350-367.
4. Joseph H. Choate: *Against the Federal Income-Tax Law* (1895)—See *United States Reports,* Vol. 157, pp. 532-553; Hicks's *Arguments and Addresses of Joseph H. Choate,* 419-472; 473-526.

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7. William Bourke Cockran: *Answering Mr. Bryan* (1896)—See Reed's *Political Oratory* (1903) II, 710-718; Brewer's *World's Best Orations* (1923) IV, 116-118; Reed's *Modern Eloquence* (1923) X, 335-343.
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See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Beard's *Contemporary American History;* Bryan's *The First Battle;* Dewey's *Financial History of U. S.;* Dewey's *National Problems;* Lingley's *Since the Civil War;* Noyse's *Thirty Years of American Finance;* Paxson's *Recent History of U. S.;* Peck's *Twenty Years of the Republic;* Rhodes's *History of U. S.;* Seligman's *The Income Tax;* Mark Sullivan's *Our Times.*

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Porter, Horace—See biography by Elsie Porter Mende.

Schurz, Carl—See *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz* (1908); Joseph H. Choate's *Eulogy of Schurz* in *American Addresses* (1911).

For Cockran, Depew, Dolliver, and Watterson, see biographical sketches in encyclopaedias.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Bryan's *Cross of Gold Speech*

I. What internal evidence is there that Bryan was familiar with: (1) *Isaiah,* 35:1; (2) Wirt's version of Henry's *Call to Arms;* (3) *Mark,* 15:17; (4) *John,* 19-2; (5) Garfield's *Nomination of Sherman?*

II. Who were: (1) the advocates of the gold standard in the Democratic convention; (2) the gentleman from Massachusetts?

III. What reference does Bryan make to such men as: (1) Mark Hanna; (2) Joseph H. Choate; (3) Jay Gould and James Fisk, Jr.—See Bassett, 646-647.

IV. Was there any literal truth in Bryan's statement: "We are fighting in defense of our homes"?

V. What indirect reference does Bryan make to: (1) the Republican doctrine of protectionism; (2) the monetary plank in the Republican platform and in the minority report for the Democratic platform?

VI. What States voted against Bryan's stand on the silver question in the Democratic convention?—See Beard's *Contemp. Am. Hist.,* 185.

Dictionary Studies from William J. Bryan

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. aggressors 2. attorney 3. believe 4. corner 5. financial 6. ideas 7. magnates 8. metropolis 9. petition 10. resources

CHAPTER XIX

ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE

The Place of Beveridge Among Orators of Era of Imperialism

Albert J. Beveridge was one of the most brilliant and conspicuous political orators of America from the close of the Spanish War in 1898, down through the administrations of Roosevelt and Taft, to the formation of the Progressive party in 1912 and the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson in 1913.

Though conspicuous throughout all this period, Beveridge was, however, never more prominent than when, at the beginning of his career, he was put forth by the Republicans as the chief protagonist of the new policy of imperialism with respect to the Philippines; while Bryan was claiming among Democrats the distinction of being the foremost protagonist of a policy of anti-imperialism.

Just as Bryan had been the product of seething unrest during the early nineties to give relief to the laboring masses of the people through Populist reforms; so Beveridge was the product of similar seething unrest to make America a great world power among commercial nations, with colonial dependencies to give it ready access to the limitless markets of the Orient.

Immediately before Beveridge burst upon the country with meteoric brilliance as an orator and statesman of the first rank, America had been engaged in war with Spain to secure the independence of Cuba; and this war had resulted in giving to the nation one of its most perplexing problems, as to

whether it should accept the responsibility of administering a colonial empire in the Philippines.

For three decades before 1898, the American government had faced a delicate situation in its relations with Spain, growing out of Spanish misrule in Cuba. The ten-year revolt of Cuba, between 1868 and 1878, had finally been crushed by the Spanish authorities, and had given place to a ruthless tyranny that was ruining the island. This tyranny produced another revolt in 1895; and the inhumanity with which the Spanish commanders attempted to put down this new movement raised widespread sympathy for the rebels in America. Both Cleveland and McKinley protested against Spanish methods of subjugation, and received from Spain promises of reform; but these promises were regarded as insincere. For interference in Cuban affairs, American citizens in Cuba were threatened with violence; and, hence, the battleship *Maine* was sent to Havana to afford protection. While this vessel lay peacefully at anchor in Havana harbor, it was blown up, without warning, from unknown causes, on the night of February 15, 1898. This great tragedy, of course, produced a furor in America. Again Spain gave assurances of her good intentions to bring about reform; but these assurances were thought to be unsatisfactory; and, on April 19, 1898, war was formally declared upon Spain for the liberation of Cuba.

The first great battle of this war was Dewey's naval victory at Manila, on the other side of the globe, in the Philippine Islands, on May 1, 1898. By this engagement, Dewey came into possession only of Manila Bay. It was necessary for him to be re-enforced by land detachments before he could occupy the city, and these did not arrive until July. Meanwhile, Admiral Sampson and Commodore Schley had bottled up and destroyed the Spanish fleet of Cervera at Santiago de Cuba,

and the army had captured that city. By August 12, the war was practically over; for, on that date, the peace protocol was signed; but Dewey, in Manila Bay, heard nothing of these developments; and, hence, on August 13, he proceeded, from land and sea, to capture the city.

Between August 13 and October 1, when the Peace Commission met in Paris, President McKinley seemed to be in a quandary concerning his policy toward the Philippines. He knew that the Filipinos were in revolt against Spain. He knew that they desired their independence. He knew that it would not do to hand them back to Spain. Yet he felt that they were incapable of sustaining their independence; that they could not be left to become the prey of other nations; and that neither could they be allowed to revert to anarchy. But really what claim had we to them? Surely not one of conquest. And if we set up any claim, how much should we demand? Should we ask for Manila only?—or for the island of Luzon?—or for the whole archipelago?

These questions bowed down the Chief-Executive with the weight of his responsibility. On his knees, he sought guidance of the Almighty to solve this baffling problem. He did not want the Philippines; but finally, as he said, the light began to dawn, and he saw his way clearly. There was nothing to be done, but to take them, to take them all, to educate their people, to uplift, and civilize, and Christianize them, and by God's grace to do the very best we could by them as our fellow-men.

When President McKinley had once made up his mind as to his duty, he did not falter. He went before the people with an expression of his purpose; and, when he felt that they were with him, he authorized his peace commissioners to demand the Philippines and to offer in payment for them the sum of twenty million dollars.

Thus it was that we negotiated for the acquisition of the Philippines; but, long before the treaty of peace was signed in Paris on December 10, 1898, a formidable opposition to the policy of imperialism, as embodied in the project to acquire these islands, had developed in America. Under the leadership of Carl Schurz, Moorfield Storey, and George Frisbie Hoar—all ardent disciples of the statesmanship of Charles Sumner—an anti-imperialist league was organized to defeat this movement for expansion into the Orient. By speeches, magazine articles, and every other form of legitimate propaganda, these three patriots tried to rouse the people against the disastrous consequences of overthrowing the principles of the Declaration of Independence by forcibly annexing a people, to govern them without their consent and in defiance of their protests.

It was a strange sight, says Lodge in his history of *The War with Spain,* to see a movement of this kind develop, since it was founded on the theory that our treaty had secured for us too much and that our peace commissioners had been too triumphant. Yet the movement grew by leaps and bounds, adding factional opposition to that which was sincere.

Almost simultaneously with the outburst of this anti-imperialist sentiment came, however, the first appearance of Beveridge as a political orator of the first magnitude in defense of the policy of the administration; for, on September 16, 1898, he sounded the key-note of the Republican congressional campaign at the Indiana State Convention by his brilliant and oft-quoted speech on *The March of the Flag.*

When Congress assembled in December, it was forced to listen to the introduction of resolutions condemning the imperialistic policy of the government; and, when the peace treaty was laid before the Senate in January, these resolutions

were eloquently debated by Senator Hoar for the anti-imperialists and by Senator Foraker in support of the administration.

After prolonged debates, lasting until February 6, in which Senators Lodge, Daniel, and Hoar took a conspicuous and brilliant part, the treaty was ratified by a vote of 61 to 29, with just one vote more than was necessary for the purpose.

This result was secured by the efforts of William J. Bryan, who came to Washington to induce a sufficient number of his followers to vote for the treaty in order to re-establish peace and save the issue of Philippine imperialism for the next presidential election in 1900.

From this time forward, Beveridge, Bryan, Roosevelt, Schurz, and Hoar were destined to occupy the center of the stage in the controversy over imperialism. On February 15, 1899, Beveridge gave another remarkable address in favor of imperialism at Philadelphia, under the title, *The Republic That Never Retreats*. This address, Bryan answered in Washington for the anti-imperialists on February 22, 1899, with a discourse entitled *America's Mission*. Bryan's talk, in turn, was answered by Roosevelt in Chicago on April 10, 1899, when Roosevelt spoke on the subject, *The Strenuous Life*. And Roosevelt was answered on October 17, in the same city, by Carl Schurz, in behalf of the anti-imperialists.

Thus, the controversy waxed hot and cold for months, until the time when it was revived with the utmost vigor by Beveridge, in the Senate, on January 9, 1900. At this time, in his maiden speech before Congress, Beveridge spoke most eloquently on his resolution: "That the Philippine Islands are territory belonging to the United States; that it is the intention of the United States to retain them as such and to

establish and maintain such governmental control throughout the archipelago as the situation may demand."

To this speech, Senator Hoar made an immediate and effective, though brief, reply; and later, on April 17, 1900, the very day on which the Second Philippine Commission under Taft set sail to establish civil government in the Philippines, when the United States had become so involved in the islands that it was almost impossible to retire, Senator Hoar made his famous and pathetic protest against the whole Philippine policy.

The question now was not one of merely taking peaceful possession of property that we had purchased from Spain, but one of conquering the native inhabitants of the islands, who, under Aguinaldo, had gone into open revolt against the military authorities of the United States.

In America, people were quite obviously growing weary of the long drawn-out discussion; but again the whole question was fanned into flame by William Jennings Bryan in his speech of August 8, 1900, when, at Indianapolis, he accepted for the second time the nomination of the Democratic party for the presidency; and this flame became a bright blaze as Beveridge took up the cudgels for the Republican party and, on September 25, 1900, delivered his famous campaign speech at Chicago on the subject, *The Star of Empire,* or *America a World Republic.*

Throughout all this discussion of the doctrine of imperialism, it appears that Beveridge was in the thick of the battle, measuring his talents with those of Foraker, Lodge, and Roosevelt, and meeting in the forum, or on the rostrum, the ablest protagonists of anti-imperialism, George Frisbie Hoar, Carl Schurz, and William Jennings Bryan.

Because, in every respect, he was the equal of these contemporary orators, and because, in the controversy that he waged, he upheld the cause that triumphed, he may with justice be called one of the foremost political orators of America in the period of agitation over the policy of Philippine imperialism.

The Life of Albert J. Beveridge

Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana was one of the superlatively great political orators of America during the first decade of the twentieth century. Almost overnight he rose to national prominence for his fresh and vigorous eloquence on the issue of imperialism. This prominence he maintained for more than a decade in the Senate and on the stump as one of the principal spokesmen for the progressive element in the Republican party. Then, on account of his affiliation with the insurgent group of Republicans that broke away under Roosevelt to form the Progressive party in 1912, he was finally forced into political retirement, except when his eloquence or leadership was demanded in times of national crisis.

Only two years the junior of William Jennings Bryan, and, like the "Great Commoner," falling heir to the progressive spirit of Mid-West politics, Beveridge was hailed by Republicans in 1900 as the youthful rival in eloquence for "the boy orator of the Platte," the so-called "peerless leader of militant Democracy." Year after year, this rivalry continued, resembling in a way the old rivalry of Lincoln and Douglas; so that, in every congressional and presidential election for a decade, the people became familiar with the brilliant spectacle of a continuous clash in debate and oratory between the so-called "Republican David and the Democratic great man of Gath."

Senator Beveridge, this superb stump-speaker and orator of the forum, was born in Highland County, Ohio, in 1862, the son of poor parents, who met with severe reverses during the period of the Civil War. In early childhood, he removed with his family to Illinois; and there at the age of twelve, he was engaged as a plough-boy to do a hired man's work behind a team of horses on an Illinois farm. At fourteen, he was doing a man's work in a railroad construction gang; and, at fifteen, he was a teamster and lumberman in charge of a logging camp. He then managed to obtain a high school education, and entered DePauw University at the age of nineteen. He worked his way through this institution by capturing every prize but one that was offered during his four-year course; and, when he graduated in 1885, he was recognized as one of the most brilliant college orators of his generation in the Middle-West.

At this time his health broke down, and again he went West to build up his physique by hard manual labor; but soon he was back once more at his studies preparing for the law; and, in a remarkably short time, he entered almost simultaneously into the practice of his profession at Indianapolis and into active participation in local politics.

Beyond his own immediate vicinity, however, he was not known by the people generally, until, in the campaign of 1898, he made, at Indianapolis, a remarkably eloquent speech, entitled *The March of the Flag,* which became at once an important campaign document for the Republican party on the issue of imperialism and was circulated widely throughout Indiana, Iowa, and other Mid-West States.

This speech undoubtedly caused Beveridge to be considered seriously as a candidate for the United States Senate in the election by the legislature, which took place in January, 1899.

At first, he was merely a dark-horse candidate, but eventually he forged ahead of the other prominent candidates and won his seat in the Senate, without having held any minor political offices, at the age of 36, when he was the next-to-the-youngest member of the newly elected upper House of Congress.

Almost instantaneously a summons came to him to speak before a huge political meeting in Philadelphia on the issue of imperialism; and there, on February 15, 1899, he laid the foundations for his nation-wide reputation as an orator by a remarkable speech on *The Republic That Never Retreats*.

Though elected to the Senate in January, 1899, he knew that he would not take his seat in that body until December; and, hence, in the meantime, he set out characteristically to make himself thoroughly familiar with the great issue of imperialism, which he knew must be the most absorbing topic of consideration in his first Congress.

This issue of imperialism was concerned with the problem of what should be done with our newly acquired territory, the Philippines. Almost no first-hand and reliable data was available for the settlement of this problem; and, hence, Beveridge decided that the best way to study this issue was to go to the Philippines themselves.

Beveridge, therefore, went to the Orient to make a personal investigation of conditions existing there; and, when he returned for the opening of Congress in December, he found that he was regarded as one of the best-informed men in the Senate on the whole Philippine question.

The opening months of 1900 witnessed in Congress long and protracted debates on the proper policy to be pursued in the Philippines, the purpose of which was to educate the public on the chief issue of the forth-coming presidential campaign. During these debates, on January 9, 1900, Beveridge delivered

before the Senate, what, perhaps, is his most famous speech, in support of the administration policy,—a speech that brought him into collision with the venerable and veteran statesman, George Frisbie Hoar, the Senator from Massachusetts, who had gone into open revolt against the policy of his own party.

From this contest, Beveridge emerged unscathed with a permanent reputation for statesmanship and an unequaled reputation for eloquence among the younger generation of Republican orators on the issue of imperialism; and, hence, it is not strange that the Republicans of the Middle West called upon him in the fall campaign to answer Bryan's speech of acceptance, with a superb stump speech, at Chicago, entitled *The Star of Empire,* or *America a World Republic.*

This speech at Chicago, Beveridge followed up by throwing down the gauntlet to Bryan in Bryan's own State; and thereafter these two orators were pitted against each other by their respective parties in every congressional and presidential election for a decade. It seemed almost impossible, in fact, for any State to open its Republican campaign thereafter, without securing the services of Beveridge as an orator; for in 1902, in 1904, in 1906, and in 1908, we find him making speeches all over the country from Maine to California, and in all the large cities like Boston, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, Denver, and San Francisco.

While Beveridge was gaining a reputation in this way as a political orator, he was by no means neglecting his opportunity to obtain a reputation also for platform oratory of a high type, such as is exhibited in his oration at the dedication of Indiana's monument on the battle-field of Shiloh, Tennessee, in 1903; in his *Eulogy of Mark Hanna* in 1904; in his eulogies of Frances Willard and James Whitcomb Riley in 1905; in his oration at Grant's monument in Galena, Illinois, in 1907;

in his address on *The Meaning of the Times* to Yale students in 1908; and in his *Eulogy of Jonathan P. Dolliver* in 1911.

Slowly but surely, however, Beveridge was finding himself in his last years in the Senate out of step with the main body of the Republican party. By following Roosevelt in his trust-busting program, by pushing through Congress the *Meat Inspection Bill* of 1906, by agitating the child labor question in 1907, by insisting on reforms in the national forest service in 1908, and by joining the Insurgents in 1909 and 1910 on the issue of the tariff, Beveridge became *person non grata* among regular Republicans; and finally, by joining the Progressive party in 1912, he cut off for a time at least all hope of future political preferment.

Retiring from the Senate in 1911, Beveridge proposed to extend his fame in a field far removed from politics; and, in pursuit of this plan, he prepared and published a monumental historic work on *The Life of John Marshall,* which critics have pronounced to be one of the world's masterpieces of biographical literature. The success of this work led him to undertake a similar project on *The Life of Abraham Lincoln,* and two volumes of this second work had been brought to completion at the time of his death in 1927.

From time to time, after 1912, Beveridge emerged from his study to give to the world some splendid specimens of his old-time eloquence, as he did in the Republican campaign of 1916, and as he did later in his own unsuccessful campaign for re-election to the Senate in 1922; but, for the most part, he seemed content, in his last years, to achieve a reputation for being one of the great twentieth-century writers on American history.

In great measure, this second goal of his ambition was attained; but however brilliant his fame may be in the field

of literature, it can never eclipse wholly the brilliancy of his early achievement in the field of oratory. To all succeeding generations, he will be known as one of the few superlatively great political orators of America in the first decade of the twentieth century—a man who shared his honors with George Frisbie Hoar, Carl Schurz, Henry Cabot Lodge, William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, Elihu Root, Charles Evans Hughes, Robert M. LaFollette, and Jonathan P. Dolliver; but a man, nevertheless, who, in the company of these great leaders, stood out among them all as their acknowledged peer.

Historical Setting of Beveridge's Speech on the Philippine Question

By his maiden speech in the United States Senate, delivered scarcely one month after his entrance into that body, Albert J. Beveridge, the newly chosen Senator from Indiana, then the next-to-the-youngest member of the upper House of Congress, did the most unprecedented thing: he refused to recognize the custom, that a newcomer in the senate should remain for months, and perhaps for years, a silent and respectful listener; but, instead, he leaped over all the barriers that usually impede the progress of senatorial novices and at once took his place among the most influential and highly respected statesmen at the national capital.

This first speech, that made Beveridge a marked man, was delivered on January 9, 1900, in support of a resolution regarding the disposition of the Philippines, which, five days before, he had introduced into the Senate, to the effect, "That the Philippine Islands are territory belonging to the United States; that it is the intention of the United States to retain them as such and to establish and maintain such governmental

control throughout the archipelago as the situation may demand."

When Beveridge rose to speak on this subject, he found that the announcement of his intention to address the Senate had attracted to the Chamber a huge audience of his colleagues and of distinguished outsiders, such as seldom gathered to hear ordinary debates; for it was known in advance that he had decided views; that he had more first-hand information than any other Senator; and that he had an unusual gift of forceful and persuasive speech.

More than a year before, in fact, during the congressional campaigns of the autumn of 1898, when the question of imperialism was a leading issue, Beveridge had made himself known throughout the Middle West by a powerful campaign speech, delivered at Indianapolis on September 16, and entitled *The March of the Flag;* and then, after his election to the Senate on January 17, 1899, he had further extended his enviable reputation for eloquence and budding statesmanship of a forthright character, by an equally powerful stump-speech at Philadelphia, on February 15, 1899, which appeared under the title, *The Republic That Never Retreats.*

By these speeches, long before he appeared to take the oath of office in the Senate on December 4, 1899, Beveridge had committed himself to the cause of expansion into the Orient; and he knew that, when he undertook the duties of his new office, he would be expected to take the same strong stand that he had previously assumed.

To prepare himself, therefore, for the heavy task that he proposed to undertake, he not only went to the bottom of all legal and constitutional questions involved in our acquisition of the Philippines, and then made himself familiar with the whole literature of colonial administration as practiced by other countries, but he also resolved to go to the Far East and

there see for himself all the conditions prevailing in the Philippines about which he might have to argue.

Accordingly, early in the spring of 1899, he set sail for Manila, and there attached himself unofficially to the First Philippine Commission under the leadership of President Jacob Gould Schurman of Cornell University, which President McKinley had sent to the islands with the purpose of investigating thoroughly and making recommendations concerning what should be done with our new possessions.

Unfortunately for this commission, and for Senator Beveridge as well, their work of investigation was greatly hampered by the existence of hostilities especially on the island of Luzon; but, in spite of this handicap, members of the commission interviewed literally hundreds of persons representing all classes of the population; and individual members of the commission, accompanied by Senator Beveridge, were able to make a tour of two thousand miles to all the different islands in the archipelago.

In this way, the commission gathered an almost inexhaustible amount of information, all of which, of course, was shared with Senator Beveridge; and, when it made its first preliminary report to the President on November 2, 1899, it voiced perfectly Beveridge's sentiment that the Filipinos were then incapable of self-government, and that the United States must retain control of the islands for an indefinite period.

President McKinley, on December 5, in his message to the new Congress, expressed this same sentiment, with the added thoughts, that, so long as insurrection in the islands continued, government by the military authorities must be maintained, but that, in the meantime, it would be the duty of Congress to devise some proper scheme of government to be inaugurated when peace was established.

Such a suggestion for Congress to open the discussion of

this problem was hardly needed, however; for the Philippine question was already regarded as the burning issue of the day; and, even before Congress adjourned for the Christmas holidays on December 20, two resolutions for disposing of the Philippines were introduced by Senators, hostile to the administration—one, by Senator Bacon of Georgia; and the other, by Senator Tillman of South Carolina.

These two resolutions, submitted on December 18, could not be debated before the holidays; but, when Congress reassembled on January 3, the whole Philippine problem was again brought to the front by another resolution introduced by Senator Pettigrew of South Dakota, who was also hostile to the administration. This last resolution was one of inquiry, asking the Executive to find out for the Senate, if the Philippine leader, Aguinaldo, had not maintained that fighting started accidentally; if he had not asked that hostilities be stopped, and that a neutral zone be established between the two armies until terms of peace could be determined; and if General Otis, for the Americans, had not replied that the fighting, once begun, must go on to the grim end.

This resolution deeply angered all the administration Senators; and there is no doubt that it would have been refused consideration, if Senator Hoar had not protested that, to reject it, would violate the traditions of the Senate.

Something had to be done, however, to counteract this flood of adverse sentiment on the administration's Philippine policy; and, accordingly Senator Beveridge introduced his resolution in favor of retaining the Philippines and of establishing there whatever government seemed desirable.

Before Beveridge had an opportunity to speak on his resolution, Senator Pettigrew had again inflamed the Senate by saying that our war in the Philippines had never been sanc-

tioned by Congress; that it was the President's war; and that it had been prosecuted by him in violation of every principle of government. Now, Pettigrew claimed, it was the duty of Congress to investigate and intervene, or abdicate all powers to the President. He wanted an investigation, he said, because he believed that "we had attacked an ally; that we had been guilty of the grossest treachery; and that we had gone further in dishonor toward an ally fighting with us than any nation ever went in all history."

This was enough to fire all the fighting blood in a man like Senator Beveridge; and it is no wonder, therefore, that he opened his great speech on January 9 by saying, that he addressed the Senate, not only because Senators and Members of the House on both sides had asked him to give the country his observations and conclusions in respect to the Philippines and the Far East; but also "because of hurtful resolutions introduced and utterances made in the Senate, every word of which will cost, and is costing, the lives of American soldiers."

With such an introduction, Beveridge proceeded, in the presence of an unprecedented audience, to maintain that "the Philippines are ours forever . . . that we will not repudiate our duty in the archipelago; that we will not abandon our opportunity in the Orient; that we will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world."

To hold the Philippines, he said, could be no mistake; for they opened to us the commerce of the East; and they, themselves, were an island-empire scarcely excelled for their wealth and their opportunities for trade. Never was there anything in our military situation to lead us to abandon the islands; for we attempted a gigantic task with insufficient support from Congress; yet we had accomplished wonders with what we

had, and all the stories of cruelty on the part of our soldiers were base falsehoods. There was but one thing that was needed, and that was a vigorous prosecution of the war to a successful termination. It was our duty to set up in the Philippines a model government, and nothing in the Declaration of Independence could be construed as forbidding such a course. Neither was there anything in the Constitution to forbid our undertaking such a task. The whole question was deeper than party politics, and deeper even than an issue of constitutional power. It was a question of assuming a trust placed on us by the decree of Providence. We could not abandon that trust; we could not abandon our soldiers in the field; we could not haul down our flag where it had once been raised over our soldier dead. It was not a question of money; not a question of honor. America could not be found wanting in this hour of crisis. His resolution should be adopted in order that peace might come, and in order that the work of saving and uplifting might be begun. Adopt it, he said, and let bloodshed cease; but refuse to adopt it, and future generations would hold us responsible for the fearful consequences that were sure to follow.

During the delivery of this speech, Beveridge was again and again applauded by his hearers; and, at its termination, there was a spontaneous outburst of applause from the galleries, which the presiding officer felt obliged to suppress.

Scarcely had Senator Beveridge finished, when Senator Hoar was on his feet to reply. Here was one of the venerable giants of the Senate entering the arena to rebuke the young stripling. Seldom before or since, has any such rebuke been administered. He tactfully and beautifully commended the silver speech of the newcomer, and welcomed his enthusiasm, and patriotism, and talents to the Senate; but then he called

attention to his speech, and said that there was much to charm our youth with the dream of empire, but in it there was no mention of such thoughts as Right, Justice, Duty, and Freedom. All he could think of was the temptation of Christ by Satan, and the appropriate reply of our Savior to the tempter, "Get thee hence, Satan."

Many people throughout the country agreed with Senator Hoar, but many others, and perhaps a vast majority of the American people, hailed Beveridge as one of the most brilliant orators and statesmen of the times, one who, with clarion voice, could proclaim to the world the firm purpose and altruistic motive of America in retaining the Philippines forever under the flag of this Republic.

Albert J. Beveridge: The Philippine Question

January 9, 1900

Mr. President, I address the Senate at this time because Senators and Members of the House on both sides have asked that I give Congress and the country my observations in the Philippines and the Far East, and the conclusions which those observations compel; and because of hurtful resolutions introduced and utterances made in the Senate, every word of which will cost, and is costing, the lives of American soldiers.

Mr. President, the times call for candor. The Philippines are ours forever,—"territory belonging to the United States," as the Constitution calls them. And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We will not retreat from either. We will not abandon our opportunity in the Orient. We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world. And we will move forward to our work, not howling our regrets like

slaves whipped to their burdens, but with gratitude for a task worthy of our strength, and thanksgiving to Almighty God that He has marked us as his chosen people, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world.

This island empire is the last land left in all the oceans. If it should prove a mistake to abandon it, the blunder once made would be irretrievable. If it proves a mistake to hold it, the error can be corrected when we will. Every other progressive nation stands ready to relieve us.

But to hold it will be no mistake. Our largest trade henceforth must be with Asia. The Pacific is our ocean. More and more Europe will manufacture the most it needs, secure from its colonies the most it consumes. Where shall we turn for consumers of our surplus? Geography answers the question. China is our natural customer. She is nearer to us than to England, Germany, or Russia, the commercial powers of the present and the future. They have moved nearer to China by securing permanent bases on her borders. The Philippines give us a base at the door of all the East.

Lines of navigation from our ports to the Orient and Australia, from the Isthmian Canal to Asia, from all Oriental ports to Australia, converge at and separate from the Philippines. They are a self-supporting and dividend-paying fleet, permanently anchored at a spot selected by the strategy of Providence, commanding the Pacific. And the Pacific is the ocean of the future. Most future wars will be conflicts for commerce. The power that rules the Pacific, therefore, is the power that rules the world. And, with the Philippines, that power is, and will forever be, the American Republic.

Mr. President, this question is deeper than any question of party politics; deeper than any question of the isolated policy of our country even; deeper even than any question

of constitutional power. It is elemental. It is racial. God has not been preparing the English-speaking and Teutonic peoples for a thousand years for nothing but vain and idle self-contemplation and self-admiration. No! He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns. He has given us the spirit of progress to overwhelm the forces of reaction throughout the earth. He has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savage and senile peoples. Were it not for such a force as this, the world would relapse into barbarism and night. And of all our race, He has marked the American people as His chosen nation to lead finally in the regeneration of the world. This is the divine mission of America, and it holds for us all the profit, all the glory, all the happiness possible to man. We are trustees of the world's progress, guardians of its righteous peace. The judgment of the Master is upon us "Ye have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things."

What shall history say of us? Shall it say that we renounced that holy trust, left the savage to his base condition, the wilderness to the reign of waste, deserted duty, abandoned glory, forgot our sordid profit even, because we feared our strength and read the charter of our powers with the doubter's eye and the quibbler's mind? Shall it say that, called by events to captain and command the proudest, ablest, purest race of history's noblest work, we declined that great commission? Our fathers would not have had it so. No! They founded no paralytic government, incapable of the simplest acts of administration. They planted no sluggard people, passive while the world's work calls them. They established no reactionary nation. They unfurled no retreating flag.

That flag has never paused in its onward march. Who dares

halt it now—now when history's largest events are carrying it forward; now when we are at last one people, strong enough for any task, great enough for any glory destiny may bestow? How comes it that our first century closes with the process of consolidating the American people into a unit just accomplished, and quick upon the stroke of that great hour presses upon us our world opportunity, world duty, and world glory, which none but a people welded into an indivisible nation can achieve or perform?

Blind indeed is he who sees not the hand of God in events so vast, so harmonious, so benign. Reactionary indeed is the mind that perceives not that this vital people is the strongest of the saving forces of the world; that our place, therefore, is at the head of the constructing and redeeming nations of the earth; and that to stand aside while events march on is a surrender of our interests, a betrayal of our duty as blind as it is base. Craven indeed is the heart that fears to perform a work so golden and so noble; that cares not to win a glory so immortal.

Do you tell me that it will cost us money? When did Americans ever measure duty by financial standards? Do you tell me of the tremendous toil required to overcome the vast difficulties of our task? What mighty work for the world, for humanity, even for ourselves, has ever been done with ease? Even our bread must we eat by the sweat of our faces. Why are we charged with power such as no people ever knew, if we are not to use it in a work such as no people ever wrought? Who will dispute the divine meaning of the fable of the talents?

Do you remind me of the precious blood that must be shed, the lives that must be given, the broken hearts of loved ones for their slain? And this is, indeed, a heavier price than all

combined. And yet as a nation every historic duty we have done, every achievement we have accomplished, has been by the sacrifice of our noblest sons. Every holy memory that glorifies the flag is of those heroes who have died that its onward march might not be stayed. It is the nation's dearest lives yielded for the flag that makes it dear to us; it is the nation's most precious blood poured out for it that makes it precious to us. That flag is woven of heroism and grief, of the bravery of men, and of women's tears, of rightousness and battle, of sacrifice and anguish, of triumph and of glory. It is these which make our flag a holy thing. Who would tear from that sacred banner the glorious legends of a single battle where it has waved on land or sea? What son of a soldier of the flag whose father fell beneath it on any field would surrender that proud record for the heraldry of a king? In the cause of civilization, in the service of the Republic anywhere on earth, Americans consider wounds the noblest decorations man can win, and count the giving of their lives a glad and precious duty.

Pray God that spirit never fails. Pray God the time may never come when Mammon and the love of ease shall so debase our blood that we will fear to shed it for the flag and its imperial destiny. Pray God the time may never come when American heroism is but a legend like the story of the Cid, American faith in our mission and our right a dream dissolved, and the glory of our mighty race departed.

Mr. President and Senators, adopt the resolution offered, that peace may quickly come, and that we may begin our saving, regenerating, and uplifting work. Adopt it, and this bloodshed will cease when these deluded children of our islands learn that this is the final word of the representatives of the American people in Congress assembled. Reject it, and the

world, history, and the American people will know where to fix forever the awful responsibility for the consequences that will surely follow such failure to do our manifest duty. How dare we delay when our soldiers' blood is flowing?

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19. Jonathan P. Dolliver: *Occupation of the Philippines* (1902)—See Reed's *Mod. Eloq.* (1923) X, 369-372.

Historical Backgrounds

See Bassett's *Short History of U. S.;* Beard's *Contemporary American History;* Latané's *America as a World Republic;* Lingley's *Since the Civil War;* Lodge's *The War with Spain;* Paxson's *Recent History of U. S.;* Rhodes's *McKinley and Roosevelt Administrations.*

Biographical Backgrounds

Bryan, William J.—See biographical sketch in *Speeches of Bryan* (1909); also memorial volume by Mary Baird Bryan (1925).

Hoar, George Frisbie—See *Autobiography of Seventy Years* (1903); also *Review of Reviews* 30:551-557.

Lodge, Henry Cabot—See biographies by Lawrence, and Groves.

McKinley, William—See biography by Olcott.

Roosevelt, Theodore—See biographies by Bishop, Thayer, Leupp, Lewis, Riis, Abbott, and Washburn.

Schurz, Carl—See *Reminiscences of Schurz* (1908).

For biographical sketches of Beveridge, Dolliver, Foraker, Proctor, and Thurston, see encyclopaedias.

Collateral Studies on Speech-Text

On Beveridge's *Speech on the Philippine Question*

I. What internal evidence is there that Beveridge was familiar with: (1) Bryant's *Thanatopsis* 77-78; (2) Bryan's speech of Feb. 22, 1899; (3) *Matthew,* 25:14-30; (4) *Luke,* 19:11-28; (5) Cass's speech on the

Ten Regiment Bill (1848); (6) *Genesis,* 3:19; (7) Milton's sonnet *To Cromwell;* (8) Sumner's battle-flag resolution—See Schurz's *Eulogy of Sumner;* (9) *Matthew,* 6:24; (10) *Exodus,* 19:5; (11) *Leviticus,* 26:12?

II. From what article and section of the Federal Constitution did Beveridge get the phrase: "territory belonging to the United States"?

III. What recent events in the colonial expansion of European nations had made the Philippines the last island empire in all the oceans to be seized?—See Hazen's *Mod. European Hist.* 373-374; Robinson and Beard's *Development of Mod. Europe* II, 143-145.

IV. What is the story of the Cid?—See encyclopaedia.

Dictionary Studies from Albert J. Beveridge

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. adepts 2. chaos 3. craven 4. heraldry 5. irretrievable 6. isolated 7. isthmian 8. legends 9. regeneration 10. senile 11. sluggard 12. sordid

CHAPTER XX

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

The Place of Roosevelt Among the Political Orators of the Period of Insurgent and Progressive Reform

For approximately twelve years at the beginning of the twentieth century, Theodore Roosevelt was the great outstanding figure in the field of American political oratory. He had, to be sure, many eminent rivals, among whom were such men as William Jennings Bryan, Henry Cabot Lodge, Albert J. Beveridge, Elihu Root, Robert M. LaFollette, Charles Evans Hughes, William E. Borah, Jonathan P. Dolliver, Hiram W. Johnson, and Woodrow Wilson; but, even among such great political orators as these, he was, nevertheless, the most outstanding spokesman of the time.

So conspicuous, indeed, was Roosevelt in this period of American history, as a forceful leader of public opinion, that these twelve years are sometimes called the "Rooseveltian Era"—an era, in which Roosevelt, first as President, and then as leader of the Insurgent Republicans and Progressive reformers, attempted to bring about far-reaching social, economic and political reforms: to curb the corrupt influence of organized wealth, and to restore to the people their rightful share in the control of the government.

This period of seething social unrest, in which Roosevelt was so conspicuous, has been described by historians as simply a revival of the period of popular discontent which came to a head in the Populist agitation for reform in the early nineties; which brought about the nomination of Bryan by Popu-

lists and Democrats in 1896; and which was temporarily sidetracked by the War with Spain in 1898, and by the subsequent discussion of Philippine imperialism in 1900.

Out of this earlier period of agitation came practically all the proposals for reform that were urged by the Insurgent, or Progressive, political orators of the Rooseveltian Era, such as, for example, the dissolution of all trusts and monopolies; government ownership or control of railroads and public utilities; a graduated Federal income-tax amendment; the conservation of natural resources, a reduction in the tariff; the extension of credit to farmers; the initiative, referendum, and recall; a system of direct primaries for the nomination of all elective office-holders; and the direct popular election of United States Senators.

When Roosevelt came into the presidency in 1901, on the death of William McKinley, practically nothing had been done to put into effect any of these proposals. A few minor laws had been passed in the interest of conservation. The *Sherman Anti-Trust Law* to make illegal all combinations in unreasonable restraint of trade had been passed in 1890, and had soon become a dead letter. A graduated Federal income-tax law had been passed in 1894, but it had been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1895. And the *Dingley Tariff Act* of 1897 had given to the country the highest protective duties that had been known since the Civil War.

By one decisive blow, all the hopes of reform, originating in the Populist movement, seemed to be crushed with the defeat of Bryan on the paramount issue of free-silver in the campaign of 1896. During the next four years, under William McKinley, and under a Republican regime whose policies were determined chiefly by Senator "Mark" Hanna of Ohio, all these reforms were brushed aside. The government was admin-

istered frankly in the interest of big business with a high protective tariff and a policy of non-interference. The Spanish War diverted the attention of people from internal problems and made them quiescent by stimulating a widespread prosperity. Already, huge combinations tending toward monopoly had sprung up in spite of the *Sherman Anti-Trust Law;* but, in the period from 1898 to 1900, the growth in such capitalistic combinations became astounding and alarming.

Only William J. Bryan, among political leaders, seemed to sense the danger of the situation; and, in the campaign of 1900, he sounded the alarm against trusts and monopolies by making this problem second only to the issue of imperialism as a paramount issue of the campaign.

The large vote polled by Bryan in this election convinced McKinley that something must be done to check the growth of monopolistic combinations. McKinley always thought of reform in terms of the tariff; and, hence, in his last speech on the day of his assassination at Buffalo, September 5, 1901, he intimated that "some of our tariffs, perchance, were no longer necessary for revenue, or to encourage and protect some of our industries."

What McKinley would have done in respect to the tariff will always remain an enigma. He had no opportunity to carry into effect any new project. An assassin's bullet carried him off, and brought Roosevelt into the presidency.

Unlike McKinley, Roosevelt was not a tariff reformer, but like William J. Bryan, he was an outspoken enemy of trusts and machine politics controlled by wealth. He would not attack the trusts along the lines suggested by McKinley through a reduction in the tariff; and neither would he attack them after the plan suggested by Bryan, which was to destroy them root and branch; but he would rather differentiate between the good

and the bad, seeking to control and regulate the good trusts and to destroy the bad.

Under his leadership, therefore, and against the determined opposition of big business, there began at once a vigorous campaign to control the vicious practices of organized wealth and to destroy combinations that exercised an unreasonable restraint of trade. After taking his cause to the people in a remarkably successful speaking tour through New England, he secured from Congress, in 1903, legislation to create a Department of Commerce and Labor, with a bureau to investigate the organization and conduct of big-business corporations. He also secured the passage of an act forbidding the practice of rebating on railroads in favor of big-business. And finally he secured legislative enactments to give precedence on all court dockets to anti-trust cases under the *Sherman Act* and to provide adequate funds for the prosecution of such cases.

Soon, he was ready to move in the prosecution of what he termed "bad trusts." In 1903 and 1904, he brought suit against the Northern Securities Company to destroy this gigantic railroad combination, which had been organized by James J. Hill and J. P. Morgan. In rapid succession, thereafter, he then prosecuted the Beef Trust, the Sugar Trust, and the Standard Oil Company for alleged illegal practices; and thus he earned the well-deserved appellation of "the trust-buster."

In his efforts to control and regulate big-business, Roosevelt accomplished most perhaps in bringing about reform in the management of the railroads and in the management of big meat-packing industries; for, in 1906, he secured, against the most persistent opposition, the enactment of the *Hepburn Law,* which forbade the issuance of free passes by railroads; which authorized the Interstate Commerce Commission to inspect the books of railroad companies; which gave the Commission power

to establish a uniform and invariable method of railroad bookkeeping; and which finally gave to the Commission the power to establish rates. And in the same year, at the same time, he secured the enactment of Pure-Food legislation to subject the operations of the big meat-packing establishments to vigorous Federal inspection in the interests of the public health.

By such activities as these, Roosevelt became known as a great social reformer; but these were not his only efforts to give the people relief from the dominating control of great moneyed interests. In 1903, he prosecuted men, high up in the government service, for fraud in the post office and land office management. In 1906, as a result of the great insurance scandals that had lately been exposed, he secured the enactment of laws prohibiting campaign gifts from corporations. And in 1907 and 1908, he inaugurated the vigorous campaign to secure, from private exploitation, the great natural resources of the country in water-powers, forests, coal, and mineral ores, which yet remained within the public domain.

Such an example, set by Roosevelt in bringing about reform, could hardly fail to stimulate emulation among other leaders of progressive movements throughout the country. Albert J. Beveridge in the Senate early became a devoted champion of the Roosevelt policies; and, in 1905 and 1906, he was joined by two other ardent supporters of progressive principles, when Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin, and William E. Borah of Idaho, came to the Senate, fresh from their triumphs at home against the entrenched power of corporate wealth and in behalf of popular government as represented in the direct primary system of nominations.

Roosevelt, before he became Vice President, had set an example for reform governors during his single term as Governor of New York. LaFollette had followed his example in

Wisconsin from 1900 to 1905. Charles Evans Hughes, when elected to the governorship of New York in 1906, after his exposure of the vast insurance scandals in 1905, again emulated Roosevelt's example. And later, in 1910, Hiram W. Johnson of California, and Woodrow Wilson of New Jersey, likewise, followed Roosevelt's example in bringing about sweeping reforms.

When Roosevelt retired from the presidency, therefore, in 1909, there was a vast body of progressive and insurgent sentiment throughout the country. This sentiment had its rallying point about the project for revising the tariff downward during the first years of the Taft administration. When it became evident that the Republicans of the Old Guard were going to force the tariff upward rather than downward, then the Insurgent Republicans, led by Senators Beveridge of Indiana, LaFollette of Wisconsin, and Dolliver of Iowa, hurled down the gage of battle. A terrific contest ensued. The Republican party was split in two. In the elections of 1910, Old-Guard Republicans, like Senator Lodge of Massachusetts, had to fight desperately for re-election. The Democrats were swept into power in the lower House of Congress. The contest went on into the campaign of 1912. Roosevelt was induced once more to become the leader of the progressive element for the Republican nomination. The Republican Convention, by so-called "steam-roller tactics," prevented his nomination. The Roosevelt party withdrew from the Convention, and set up an independent third-party movement; and, by the split, that was thus caused in the Republican ranks, the Progressive revolt made possible the election of a Democratic reform candidate in the person of Woodrow Wilson.

At last, through indirection, the Progressive element in American politics had won a complete triumph. By the ex-

piration of the first Congress under President Wilson, almost all the ideals of the early Progressive movement had been realized: big-business had been placed under drastic Federal regulation; a Federal income-tax amendment had been enacted; the conservation of natural resources was safeguarded; the tariff was reduced; the initiative and referendum had been widely adopted; a system of direct primaries had been almost universally adopted; and the direct popular election of United States Senators had been secured by amendment to the Federal Constitution.

In this great work of reform, many statesmen and political orators had played a prominent part. William Jennings Bryan, Henry Cabot Lodge, Albert J. Beveridge, Elihu Root, Robert M. LaFollette, Charles Evans Hughes, William E. Borah, Jonathan P. Dolliver, Hiram W. Johnson, and Woodrow Wilson, all had won brilliant laurels and achieved great triumphs during the period of conflict. But among them all, none perhaps did more for the cause, either directly or indirectly, than did Theodore Roosevelt. From the early beginnings of the movement for reform, up to its concluding struggle, Roosevelt was almost continuously in the forefront of the battle. He did not take part in each isolated contest for reform, nor did he originate many of the items in the reform program; but, as one historian has said, he was the "gigantic advertiser and popularizer" of the whole reform movement.

Spasmodically, and for brief periods, other political orators held the center of the stage during the upheavals that marked the first twelve years of agitation at the beginning of the century; but, during all this time, Roosevelt never ceased to command public interest and public respect. Without disparagement to others, therefore, Roosevelt may be called the great outstanding spokesman of his time.

The Life of Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt, the Rough-Rider President, was one of the most picturesque statesmen that ever dominated the public life of America. The leader and scourge of his own political party, the maker and un-maker of American Presidents, a friend of the people and a companion of kings, Roosevelt was regarded as the ideal exponent of his own phrase, "the strenuous life."

In the field of statesmanship, Roosevelt will always be remembered as the insistent champion of preparedness for war, and as the rough-and-ready reformer, who broke through all conventional restraints in wielding the so-called "big stick" upon the corrupt practices of organized wealth in American politics.

Though hated and feared by his opponents, he was loved by the people, even to the point of idolatry, "for the enemies he had made." To them, he was "the man of destiny"—the "most typical of all Americans"; and, in office or out of office, they were willing to follow him with enthusiastic acclaim even down to defeat "at Armageddon."

This many-sided statesman, soldier, author, publicist, hunter, explorer, naturalist, and historian, was of necessity and through constant practice one of the most forceful stump-speakers and platform orators of America, using his peculiar and vigorous eloquence for the uplift of the masses, for the checking of ultra-radical sentiment, for the creation of patriotism, and for the aggrandizement of the nation.

Speaking throughout the country in every city and town and village and hamlet, on every theme and in every crisis, no orator in the first two decades of the twentieth century was more admired, or more emulated, than was this man, who, like

Mark Antony, claimed to have none of the arts of eloquence, but simply spoke right on, giving utterance to plain, blunt truths, and appealing to the innate sense of righteousness among those who came by thousands to hear his message and be thrilled by his magnetic personality.

This dominating statesman and powerful political orator was born in New York City in 1858, the son of a well-to-do merchant of Dutch ancestry. As a child, he was extremely frail; and, accordingly, he received his early training at home rather than in the public schools. There, however, he became an omnivorous reader, and was known to his family as "a bookworm"; while, at the same time, he was taking boxing lessons and doing everything possible to build up his physique.

At the age of seventeen, he entered Harvard College, and, during his education there, attracted no notice for special talent, except that he became, before graduation, the champion boxer of the institution, and was one of the editors of a college paper.

Receiving his bachelor's degree with the class of 1880, Roosevelt went immediately to Europe, and there demonstrated in mountain-climbing his acquired physical prowess by making the hazardous ascent of the Matterhorn. He then returned to America, and for two years studied law. This profession held for him small attraction, however; and, in 1882, he entered upon his long career in politics as an assemblyman in the New York legislature.

At the State capital, he was regarded, at first, merely as another "silk-stocking"; but very soon he convinced his associates that he was a man with whom they must reckon. A reformer from the very beginning, he exposed in the Assembly the corruption of a State judge and of the Attorney-General, and demanded their impeachment. Day after day, his plea

was ridiculed; but, day after day, it was repeated, until, at last, he was known throughout the State. An investigation was ordered, and the offenders were "white-washed," but no longer was this newcomer regarded as a harmless "silk-stocking."

For three terms, Roosevelt served in the Assembly; and, during his last session, in 1884, he was nominated by his party for the Speakership. To regain his strength, he then went West to North Dakota, where he purchased two ranches and began his historical writings. He came into prominence again momentarily as an unsuccessful candidate for the mayoralty of New York City in 1886; but he did not hold another political office, until President Harrison appointed him, in 1889, to be a national civil-service commissioner at Washington. This office, he continued to hold even under the Democratic administration of President Cleveland until 1895, when, much to his delight, he was called upon to be a police commissioner of New York City. He was exercising the functions of this office with great satisfaction to the reform element, when President McKinley was urged to make him an Assistant-Secretary of the Navy. At first, McKinley demurred, saying that Roosevelt would be "a bull in a china closet"; but, at last, he yielded and gave Roosevelt an opportunity to build up the navy, so that it was the only branch of our service that was ready for the burden placed upon it during the Spanish War.

No man was more impatient with McKinley than was Roosevelt in consequence of the prolonged delay before war was declared upon Spain to liberate Cuba and avenge the destruction of the *Maine*. Roosevelt, in fact, said that McKinley "had no more backbone than a chocolate éclaire." At last, however, when war did come, Roosevelt could not remain at a desk in Washington; but, with Leonard Wood, he organized a regiment of "rough riders" from the West and went with

them into the famous action at San Juan Hill for the capture of Santiago.

Emerging from the war with the title of colonel, Roosevelt was forced upon the politicians of New York for the Republican nomination for the governorship. No hero of the war had acquired a more amazing popularity; and, hence, his election in the autumn of 1898 was overwhelmingly assured.

For a term of two years, he occupied the governor's mansion at Albany, and inaugurated a program of reform in State politics that brought him into collision with the old party bosses. They did not like his vigorous measures to check mismanagement and corruption in the administration of the State's canal system; and neither did they like his reforms in the civil service. They became extremely hostile to him, however, when he proposed to tax railroad franchises; and, not knowing how otherwise to get rid of him, they determined to secure his nomination for the vice-presidency in 1900. To this project, President McKinley was at first opposed, and so was the great Republican boss, "Mark" Hanna; but the opposition of these men could not withstand the combined popular clamor for him and the insistent demand of Senator Platt that he be gotten out of New York State politics. Hence, he was nominated and elected by the Republicans to an office that was intended to be his political grave.

By a singular caprice of fortune, this so-called "man of destiny" soon rose, however, from his well-prepared grave. In September, 1901, President McKinley was assassinated; and, by this tragedy, Roosevelt was raised to that office, of all offices, from which the political bosses would have barred him.

On undertaking the duties of the presidency, Roosevelt pledged himself to carry out faithfully all the policies of the

McKinley administration; but such a pledge, even though scrupulously kept, could not prevent a display of Roosevelt's own power in unforeseen emergencies. As one political satirist said, "Roosevelt did carry out the policies of McKinley—and bury them."

Between 1901 and 1904, Roosevelt settled by strong-hand methods a serious coal strike; and, in the same way, he checked hostile demonstrations by European powers against Venezuela for the collection of debts. His most characteristic achievement, however, which proved to be an epoch-making event, was his "coup d'etat" against Colombia to secure, by means of a revolution, the right to build the Panama Canal.

In 1904, Roosevelt was one of the most popular men in the country, and secured his election to the presidency for a second term, which was to be really his own, by an unprecedented land-slide. Then, he began with renewed vigor to contend against the abuses of "big business." Following, for a moment, the leadership of Senator Beveridge, he first attacked the meat-packing industries to force them to clean up the stock-yards; and, out of this struggle, came the sweeping reforms of the *Pure-Food and Drugs Acts*. Almost at the same time, he brought to a successful termination his own bitter struggle to give to the Interstate Commerce Commission control over railway rates; and, having already antagonized the interests representing great wealth, he incurred their wrath still further by his prosecution of "bad trusts," and by his insistence upon the passage of an *Employers' Liability Act*.

During the course of his second administration, Roosevelt distinguished himself, not only for his domestic reforms, but also for his brilliant handling of international relations. Through his mediation, the Russo-Japanese war was terminated; by his interference in Cuba and San Domingo, stability and order were maintained; by his despatch of Secretary Root

to South America, Pan-American good-will was established; and by his sending our battle-fleet around the world, the threat of a Japanese war upon us was dispelled.

With a turn of his hand, Roosevelt could have received the Republican nomination for a third term in 1908; but, instead, he threw all his influence into the scales to secure the nomination of Taft, and himself retired from politics to go big-game hunting in Africa.

This trip was remarkable for the many specimens obtained for American museums, and for the triumphal progress of Roosevelt through Europe at its termination. After visiting almost every monarch in Europe and delivering addresses before learned bodies in the great universities of the continent and England, Roosevelt returned, in 1910, to America to be hailed with enthusiasm by the Progressive element of the Republican party.

He had no desire to become again the nominee of his party for the presidency; but, in the spring of 1912, he yielded to the overwhelming demand of his followers, and would have been nominated in the regular convention of that year, if "steam-roller" tactics had not been used against him by the "Old Guard."

Indignant at the loss of the nomination, he summoned his delegates to a new convention, and received from that body the nomination of the new Progressive party. He immediately took to the stump and prosecuted a vigorous campaign, eliminating the chances of Taft and bringing on a battle-royal between himself and Wilson, the Democratic candidate.

By the split in the Republican party, Roosevelt was defeated as well as Taft; and, again retiring from active politics, Roosevelt led an expedition of explorers and naturalists into the jungles of Brazil.

When the European War broke out in 1914, however,

Roosevelt became prominent again as one of the chief critics of the Wilson administration. He denounced unsparingly the proclamation of neutrality as a compromise between right and wrong; he ridiculed mercilessly the President's indecision and inaction during the long period of diplomatic note-writing; and he used his utmost efforts to attain preparedness for our ultimate entrance into the conflict.

He was thrilled beyond measure, when at last the President asked for a declaration of war in 1917, and offered to place on the firing line immediately two fully-equipped divisions that he had organized; but, much to his disgust, he was denied the privilege of serving his country in this manner. He, therefore, gave all his efforts to combating the anti-American sentiment of hyphenated Americans and pacifists, who were seeking to cripple the government at every turn in its measures for the vigorous prosecution of the war.

Roosevelt lived just long enough to see the complete triumph of our arms; and, when he died in January, 1919, nothing gave him greater satisfaction than the five service-stars he wore for members of his family who had taken part in the conflict. One of these was a gold star for his son Quentin, killed in action, as a sacrifice to patriotism, which the father himself, in his own person, would have been only too glad to make.

At the time of Roosevelt's death, the whole nation and the whole world mourned his loss as irreparable. Friend and foe united in paying him tribute. Old feuds were forgotten, and he was pronounced to be the most American of all Americans, a friend of the people, the disciple of righteousness, and the incarnation of the vigorous patriotism that he had preached.

As an orator, Theodore Roosevelt had but one style, and that was the style he first exhibited in his stump-speaking

during the presidential canvass of 1900. Describing Roosevelt at that period, his biographer, William Roscoe Thayer, says of him, that "his attitude as a speaker, his gestures, the way in which his pent-up thoughts seemed almost to strangle him before he could utter them, his smile showing the white rows of teeth, his fist clenched as if to strike an invisible adversary, the sudden dropping of his voice, and leveling of his forefinger as he became almost conversational in tone, and seemed to address special individuals in the crowd before him, the strokes of sarcasm, stern and cutting, and the swift flashes of humor which set the great multitude in a roar, became familiar to millions of his countrymen; and cartoonists made his features and gestures familiar to many other millions."

To enumerate all his great speeches would be quite impossible; but it may not be unfair to say that among those that are best known are his speech on *The Strenuous Life* in 1899; his *Muck-Raker Speech* in 1906; his *Khartoum Speech* and *Guildhall Speech* in 1910; his *New Nationalism Speech* in 1911; his *Columbus Speech,* his *Carnegie Hall Address,* and his *Armageddon Speech* in 1912; his *Plattsburg Speech* in 1915; his *St. Louis Speech* in 1916; and his Chicago speech on *The Flag on the Firing Line* in 1917.

In all these speeches, as well as in all Roosevelt's writings, he impressed himself upon the American people as a maker of phrases, quite comparable even to the renowned Woodrow Wilson; for, to Roosevelt, may be traced the use of such terms as "the strenuous life,"—"rose-water reformers,"—"embalmed beef,"—"race suicide,"—"bush-league czars,"—"outpatients of Bedlam,"—"the lunatic fringe,"—"muck-rakers," —"molly-coddles," —"logothetes," —"weasel words," —"the Cubist school of patriotism,"—"professional pacifists,"—"parlor Bolshevists,"—and "hyphenated Americans."

By the use of such phrases as these, Roosevelt drove home his messages to the people. According to Elihu Root, "Roosevelt was always sincere and simple, never ornate and florid. He spoke not the tongue of the poet or the philosopher. He had not what Macauley credited to Gladstone 'a command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and doubtful import.' No one ever doubted what Theodore Roosevelt meant. No one ever doubted that what he said he believed, he intended, and he would do. He was a man, not of sentiment or expression, but of feeling and of action. He uttered no fine sentences, satisfied that that was the end—the thing to be accomplished. His words were always the precursors of effective action."

This comment on Roosevelt's oratory agrees perfectly with the description of his style given by Henry Cabot Lodge in his *Eulogy of Roosevelt* before Congress. Yet Lodge adds to it this statement, that "in many of Roosevelt's more carefully prepared addresses are to be found passages of impressive eloquence, touched with imagination, and instinct with grace and feeling."

As a writer in the *World's Work* has said of him, Roosevelt presents "a case of 'all thoughts, all passions, all delights.' He is our most wonderful brother. No one can be confident that there is any emotion, any thought, any inspiration, but he has had it, or that there is any light whose glimmer he has not caught. He is constructive, destructive, a builder-up, a puller-down; a friend of the soul, glorious, rampageous, vastly able. He seems to butt against our whirling earth to keep it in its course. Never was there such a man."

Not an orator at all in the sense that Choate and Webster, Lincoln and Douglas, Ingersoll and Grady, Bryan and Bever-

idge, Lodge and Wilson were orators, but rather one, in the sense that John Adams was one, when, as Webster said, his oratory was "something greater and higher than all eloquence —it was action—noble, sublime, god-like action."

Such was Roosevelt, one of the most picturesque figures in American history during the first two decades of the twentieth century, a statesman and orator, whose written and spoken words in behalf of patriotism and humanity will long command the respect and homage of the American people.

Historical Setting of Roosevelt's Speech on the Man with the Muck-Rake

Of all the oratory heard in America during the first decade of the twentieth century, no single speech throws more light upon the character of the times—upon the seething condition of social and industrial unrest—than did the *Muck-Rake Speech* of Roosevelt, delivered on April 14, 1906, at the laying of the corner-stone of the new Office Building for the House of Representatives in Washington. And similarly no single speech, perhaps, preached such a powerful lesson in regard to the proper attitude of people toward the undertakings of democratic government.

This speech is said to have been Roosevelt's most memorable plea to halt the movement for bringing to the bar of public opinion the immoral practices of organized wealth—a movement for which he, in large measure, was responsible—when the movement had progressed so far as to have caught up in its wake the sensational gossip-monger and the irresponsible demagogue.

In 1902, Roosevelt had inaugurated a campaign of ex-

posure against the methods of big business in order to secure support from the people for his "trust-busting" program; and his example soon attracted to the general movement a whole host of responsible, and irresponsible, writers and speakers, who, in newspapers and magazines, as well as on the lecture platform, throughout the country, began to create suspicion and distrust against all persons of wealth and especially against all successful captains of industry.

Among the earliest responsible writers to lay bare the unfair practices of big-business was Ida M. Tarbell, who published in 1903 her voluminous and scholarly *History of the Standard Oil Company*. And, at the same time, that she was creating for herself a permanent reputation as a historian, another writer, by the name of Lincoln Steffens, was winning the ear of the public by his exposure of civic corruption in a series of articles entitled *The Shame of the Cities*.

Through the success of these publications, a large group of popular magazines, including *McClure's, Munsey's, The Cosmopolitan,* and *Collier's Weekly,* adopted the policy of giving to the public regularly a vast body of seething, and sometimes lurid, literature of exposure. No man, no business seemed immune from their attacks; and, at last, it seemed as if they were about to destroy all faith in the existence of public or private virtue.

But the assaults upon the character of public men and industrial leaders were not confined to yellow journals and cheap popular magazines. The zest for this type of literature invaded even the field of fiction; and, after Frank Norris's exposure of the evils of cut-throat competition in his novel, *The Octopus,* in 1901, there came, in 1906, the exposure of the meat-packing business in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle,* and the

exposure of intrigues between the railroads and big-business in Winston Churchill's *Coniston.*

The revelations made by such works of literature as these might have left no impress on the public mind, however, if they had not been re-enforced by the official exposures of Charles Evans Hughes in his investigation of the great insurance scandals; if they had not been substantiated by the uncovering of vast corruption and graft in the Middle West by Joseph W. Folk; and if they had not been supported by the evidence collected by James R. Garfield in respect to unfair practices in the transportation of petroleum.

So great a distrust and hatred for organized wealth had been created by these official and unofficial exposures, that, when Congress assembled in 1905, nothing could prevent the lower House from enacting legislation to curb evils in railroad management with a spirit that was not only vindictive but also venomous.

The railroad rate law that was passed by the House at this time was frowned upon by the Senate and allowed to die without coming to a vote. But such action could not down the spirit of reform. The public would not be appeased; and so, in the next Congress, another bill was introduced, with the President's support. To pass this bill, so much popular pressure was brought to bear on the Senate, that Senator Lodge, who opposed it, was led to say: "I have heard but two arguments of any weight adduced in favor of passing this reform bill. They are in substance these: First, we will blow your brains out if you don't pass it; and second, we will drag you through a horse-pond if you don't pass it."

In spite of such menacing arguments, however, it soon became apparent that the Senate would oppose the passage of

the bill; and when the public learned of the intention of the Senate, the ultra-radical agitators started a campaign of vilification against the opposition Senators such as the country had never witnessed before.

Then, at the height of this campaign, all sober-minded people were shocked beyond measure by the appearance in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* of a series of lurid articles entitled *The Treason of the Senate,* from the pen of David Graham Phillips, in an attempt to oust from the Senate, by methods that would have shamed Cicero in denouncing Catiline, those who opposed the popular clamor.

At the same time that these articles were appearing in the spring of 1906, the press was carrying items of news and editorials on the arrest of officials of the Western Federation of Miners, who were accused of complicity in the murder of ex-Governor Steunenberg of Idaho for opposing labor violence; and, from such sources, it appeared that organized labor was ready to abet, to encourage, and to condone wholesale murder to promote its war upon capital.

Surely, it seemed as if the world had gone mad; as if the people had lost all sense of decency; and as if the leaders of the masses were bent upon anarchy. A halt in this movement must be made. Self-respecting men could not be induced to take public office. Efficient men could not be procured even for such a work as the building of the Panama Canal. They would not subject themselves to such vile attacks and such virulent suspicions.

No man felt himself more injured by his allies than did Roosevelt. He was a middle-of-the-road reformer; and in no way a radical demagogue belonging to what he called the "lunatic fringe" of the reform movement.

Action, therefore, was forced upon him to rescue his work of reform from the zealots who gathered under his banners. On April 14, 1906, he accordingly determined to strike an effective blow for sanity and decency, in the movement to restrain capital from abuse.

While addressing a vast audience in Washington at the laying of the corner-stone of the Office Building for the House of Representatives, he took as his theme, *the man with the muck rake.* Borrowing a picture from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* he presented to his hearers his attitude toward the modern muck-raker. He was, said he, "a man who could look no way but downward, with the muck-rake in his hand; who was offered a celestial crown for his muck-rake, but who would neither look up, nor regard the crown he was offered, but continued to rake to himself the filth of the floor."

In this speech, Roosevelt said that he did not condemn mud-slinging as mud-slinging; and neither did he condone white-washing as white-washing. What he did object to, was mud-slinging for the mere sake of mud-slinging, for the sake of private profit, for the satisfaction of gloating over one's victim. What he did object to, was a villainous attack upon an honest man, or an untruthful attack even upon a dishonest man.

Such carnivals of mud-slinging would in the end destroy all values, defeat their own purpose, and undermine the Republic. What was needed now, he thought, was less of exposure and more of constructive statesmanship. The battle for the rights of the common people must go on; but it must raise itself, to be effective, above the level of the brothel.

In this speech, Roosevelt himself set forth examples of his own constructive statesmanship by appealing again, in a forceful and dignified manner, for the passage of his railway rate

bill, and by intimating that he intended to ask for a Federal graduated inheritance-tax to reduce swollen and ill-gotten fortunes.

For such proposals, however, by the very irony of fate, he immediately drew down upon his head the wrath of muck-rakers as being a muck-raker himself. By the capitalistic press, he was also hotly attacked as "having proposed the most radical and confiscatory assault upon property that had ever been heard of." One paper, in fact, went so far as to claim that his speech would "be a mortification to his friends and a real public misfortune; that indeed his mouthing had made even Bryan appear a reactionary, and Hearst a conservative; while it had elevated Debs, the socialist, and Powderly, the agitator, to the level of presidential statesmanship."

Such comments, however, were but the ravings of those who were being forced to adopt higher moral standards by Roosevelt's policies. For a time, muck-raking seemed to continue with unabated fury; but it is quite noticeable that historians have fixed upon the following year as the date of its decadence.

What part Roosevelt's address had in abating this national disgrace is matter of conjecture; but certain it is that Roosevelt's speech on this occasion was instantaneously hailed by critics as a classic; that it was widely printed and circulated; and that the only effect of its serious perusal could be an abatement of the evil which it so vividly condemned.

No speech could throw more light upon the character of the times; and no speech could present to posterity a more valuable lesson for those who hope to perpetuate, in the American Republic, the existence of a true and efficient democracy. With Washington's *Farewell Address,* Roosevelt's speech on *The Man with the Muck-Rake* will always stand forth as a timely and pertinent admonition to the American people.

Theodore Roosevelt: The Man with the Muck-Rake

April 14, 1906

Over a century ago, Washington laid the corner-stone of the Capitol in what was then little more than a tract of wooded wilderness here beside the Potomac. We now find it necessary to provide by great additional buildings for the business of the government. This growth in the need for the housing of the government is but a proof and example of the way in which the extraordinary growth of population has been outstripped by the growth of wealth and the growth of complex interests. The material problems that face us today are not such as they were in Washington's time, but the underlying facts of human nature are the same now as they were then. Under altered external form we war with the same tendencies toward evil that were evident in Washington's time, and are helped by the same tendencies for good. It is about some of these that I wish to say a word today.

In Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* you may recall the description of the Man with the Muck-Rake, the man who could look no way but downward, with the muck-rake in his hand; who was offered a celestial crown for his muck-rake, but would neither look up nor regard the crown he was offered, but continued to rake to himself the filth of the floor.

In *Pilgrim's Progress,* the Man with the Muck-Rake is set forth as the example of him whose vision is fixed on carnal instead of spiritual things. Yet he also typifies the man who in this life consistently refuses to see aught that is lofty, and fixes his eyes with solemn intentness only on that which is vile and debasing. Now it is very necessary that we should not flinch from seeing what is vile and debasing. There is filth on the floor, and it must be scraped up with the muck-rake; and there are times and places where this service is the most

needed of all the services that can be performed. But the man who never does anything else, who never thinks or speaks or writes save of his feats with the muck-rake, speedily becomes, not a help to society, not an incitement to good, but one of the most potent forces for evil.

There are in the body politic, economic and social, many and grave evils, and there is urgent necessity for the sternest war upon them. There should be relentless exposure of, and attack upon, every evil man, whether politician or business man, every evil practice, whether in politics, in business, or in social life. I hail as a benefactor every writer or speaker, every man who, on the platform, or in a book, magazine, or newspaper, with merciless severity makes such attack, provided always that he in turn remembers that the attack is of use only if it is absolutely truthful. The liar is no whit better than the thief, and if his mendacity takes the form of slander, he may be worse than most thieves. It puts a premium upon knavery untruthfully to attack an honest man, or even with hysterical exaggeration to assail a bad man with untruth. An epidemic of indiscriminate assault upon character does no good, but very great harm. The soul of every scoundrel is gladdened whenever an honest man is assailed, or when a scoundrel is untruthfully assailed.

Now, it is easy to twist out of shape what I have just said, easy to affect to misunderstand it, and, if it is slurred over in repetition, not difficult really to misunderstand it. Some persons are sincerely incapable of understanding that to denounce mud-slinging does not mean the endorsement of white-washing; and both the interested individuals who need white-washing and those others who practice the mud-slinging like to encourage such confusion of ideas. One of the chief counts against those who make indiscriminate assault upon men in

business or men in public life is that they invite a reaction which is sure to tell powerfully in favor of the unscrupulous scoundrel who really ought to be attacked, who ought to be exposed, who ought, if possible, to be put in the penitentiary. If Aristides is praised overmuch as just, people get tired of hearing it; and over-censure of the unjust finally and from similar reasons results in their favor.

Any excess is almost sure to invite a reaction; and, unfortunately, the reaction, instead of taking the form of punishment of those guilty of the excess, is very apt to take the form either of punishment of the unoffending or of giving immunity, and even strength, to offenders. The effort to make financial or political profit out of the destruction of character can only result in public calamity. Gross and reckless assaults on character, whether on the stump or in newspaper, magazine, or book, create a morbid and vicious public sentiment, and at the same time act as a profound deterrent to able men of normal sensitiveness and tend to prevent them from entering the public service at any price. As an instance in point, I may mention that one serious difficulty encountered in getting the right type of men to dig the Panama Canal is the certainty that they will be exposed, both without, and, I am sorry to say, sometimes within, Congress, to utterly reckless assaults on their character and capacity.

At the risk of repetition, let me say that my plea is not for immunity to, but for the most unsparing exposure of, the politician who betrays his trust, of the big business man who makes or spends his fortune in illegitimate or corrupt ways. There should be a resolute effort to hunt every such man out of the position he has disgraced. Expose the crime, and hunt down the criminal; but remember that even in the case of crime, if it is attacked in sensational, lurid, and untruthful

fashion, the attack may do more damage to the public mind than the crime itself. It is because I feel that there should be no rest in the endless war against the forces of evil that I ask that the war be conducted with sanity as well as with resolution. The men with the muck-rakes are often indispensable to the well-being of society; but only if they know when to stop raking the muck, and to look upward to the celestial crown above them, to the crown of worthy endeavor. There are beautiful things above and around about them; and, if they gradually grow to feel that the whole world is nothing but muck, their power of usefulness is gone. If the whole picture is painted black, there remains no hue whereby to single out the rascals for distinction from their fellows. Such painting finally induces a kind of moral color-blindness; and people affected by it come to the conclusion that no man is really black, and no man really white, but that all are gray. In other words, they believe neither in the truth of the attack nor in the honesty of the man who is attacked; they grow suspicious of the accusation as of the offense; it becomes well-nigh hopeless to stir them either to wrath against wrongdoing or to enthusiasm for what is right; and such a mental attitude in the public gives hope to every knave, and is the despair of honest men.

Historical Setting of Roosevelt's Armageddon Speech

The *Armageddon Speech,* by Theodore Roosevelt, delivered before five thousand people in the Auditorium, at Chicago, on June 17, 1912, is one of the great historic pieces of American political oratory, truly epoch-making in its vital consequences. It has been described by one of Roosevelt's biographers as "a torrential speech calculated to rouse the passions rather

than the minds of his hearers,"—a speech, therefore, which can be compared to that earlier masterpiece of outbursting passion and eloquence, *The Cross of Gold,* by William Jennings Bryan.

This speech, Roosevelt delivered to a mass-meeting of his enthusiastic followers on the eve of the Republican National Convention of 1912, when it had become apparent that a terrific battle was impending for control of the convention, between the forces of progress and reform, who were supporting Roosevelt for the presidential nomination, and the forces of reaction and conservatism, who were using every effort to secure the re-nomination of the machine-candidate, William Howard Taft.

The *Armageddon Speech* came as the culminating blow of Roosevelt's bold and energetic campaign for the Republican nomination, upon which he had entered tardily and reluctantly as a leader of the Progressive faction less than four months earlier.

When Roosevelt returned from Africa in 1910, he was greatly disappointed with the course taken by President Taft as his successor in the office of the Chief-Executive, because he thought that his course was wholly inconsistent with the progressive policies for which he himself had fought; but, in spite of this disappointment, Roosevelt honestly hoped and planned to keep outside the swirl of politics.

He had scarcely landed in America, however, when he was importuned to aid Governor Charles E. Hughes of New York to secure, against terrific opposition, the enactment of a direct primary law; while, at the same time, he received two thousand requests to make addresses in various cities all over the country.

His resolution to steer clear of politics soon failed him under

pressure that was too great to withstand; and, accordingly, he planned a trip to the Far West, where he made historic speeches at Cheyenne, Wyoming; at Reno, Nevada; at Denver, Colorado; at Ossawatomie, Kansas; and at many other places in fourteen different States—setting forth progressive doctrines, which were sadly in need of a strong champion, and which afterwards became known collectively under the alluring title of *The New Nationalism*.

Upon returning from this trip, he entered, heart and soul, into the battle to secure a direct primary law for New York State; and, in the course of this conflict, he rose to a dominating position in the Republican State Convention, as its temporary chairman, dictating the platform of the party, and obtaining the nomination for governor of the Hughes candidate, Henry L. Stimson, whom he afterwards supported vigorously in a losing campaign.

Thus, Roosevelt was swept irresistibly back into the swirl of American politics. When Dolliver died in the fall of 1910, and when LaFollette broke down in February, 1912, it became more and more evident that the Progressive Republicans must turn to Roosevelt for leadership in the next presidential contest.

For month after month, however, Roosevelt refused to give the Progressive leaders any encouragement. He would say neither "yes" nor "no" to their demands; because he wished to be sure that these demands represented the popular will. Finally, however, a decision had to made; and Frank A. Munsey, then editor of *The Press* of New York City, took upon himself the task of securing a statement from Roosevelt by making a public appeal to him to announce whether, if nominated, he would, or would not, refuse to run.

This appeal was made in January, 1912, without receiving at the time any public reply. Hence, it became necessary for

others to join in making the appeal more emphatic and more representative of a broad, popular demand. On February 12, accordingly, just such an irresistible appeal was made by the Republican governors of seven States, including Bass of New Hampshire, Glasscock of West Virginia, Osborn of Michigan, Stubbs of Kansas, Aldrich of Nebraska, Carey of Wyoming, and Hadley of Missouri.

But, still, Roosevelt made no statement; and it is doubtful whether he would have made any, had not President Taft, in New York, on February 14, attacked the doctrines set forth by Roosevelt in his speeches and articles on *The New Nationalism,* as originating in men who were "not progressives," but merely "political emotionalists or neurotics."

This speech of Taft's stung Roosevelt into action. On February 21, 1912, he replied to it vigorously in an historic speech, entitled *A Charter of Democracy,* which he delivered at Columbus, Ohio, before the State Constitutional Convention. In this speech, Roosevelt declared himself without reserve as favoring the policies of establishing the initiative and referendum, and the recall of judicial decisions. From that moment, as he himself expressed it, "his hat was in the ring"; his mind was made up; he knew he could not win; but he would make the fight; and, five days later, he announced to the country that he was a candidate for the Republican nomination.

Once committed to the cause of liberalism, and being an avowed candidate of the Progressives for the presidential nomination, Roosevelt determined that the campaign should not be a tame one. He knew, in fact, that he must fight with all his might, if he were to make an impression at all upon the forthcoming convention in June; for already the Taft forces, through the use of Federal patronage, had secured a formid-

able number of delegates from the Solid South, which never gave one electoral vote to the Republicans in the final election. To combat such an array of machine votes, Roosevelt must take his cause to the people of the Northern and Western States, where presidential primary laws permitted the people to express their choice in respect to presidential candidates. This, therefore, he did with extraordinary vim, appealing to the country chiefly through the press, but now and then making speeches, like his *Carnegie Hall Address,* on March 20, 1912, in which he brought forth involuntary cheers even from his enemies, the entrenched political bosses of New York State.

When the exciting canvass was finished, it was found that Taft had secured all the dummy delegates from the Solid South and all the delegates from States employing the convention system of nomination; but, in contrast with this record, Roosevelt seemed to have carried every State that had established a system of presidential primaries; while, in the important States of Illinois, Pennsylvania, California, and Ohio, Taft's own State, he had succeeded in "snowing under" his opponent.

Before the convention opened, it appeared that Roosevelt had about 470 delegates pledged for his nomination, and that Taft had about 455; but 540 were necessary to win; and the right of more than 200 delegates to be seated was contested. According to precedent, therefore, the Republican National Committee met in Chicago, ten days before the opening of the convention, and began to vote in secret upon the contested places to determine the temporary roll of delegates who should make up the convention. Before this committee, many a battle was fought; for its decisions were likely to determine the final nomination of the convention; but, in 92 cases that were con-

sidered, the Taft forces, who were in control of the committee, though in some cases they were not even accredited members of the convention, decided invariably against Roosevelt and for their own candidate.

Such treatment from the committee, of course, aroused a stern protest from the Roosevelt leaders; while public charges of "theft" and "robbery" were hurled at the committee in the press and by wildly excited stump-speakers.

At first, Roosevelt did not believe that his presence in Chicago at the convention would be necessary; but he was highly indignant at the course of the committee, and he was made more indignant when he found that the private telephone wire from Chicago to his home at Oyster Bay was being tapped by his enemies. There was nothing for him to do, he thought, but to go to Chicago and assume personal direction of his campaign. Accordingly, on Friday, June 14, he boarded the train at New York for Chicago, and took with him a large bodyguard and retinue of his kinsmen.

On his arrival in Chicago, he was greeted with such tumultuous applause from the throngs of countless thousands that it would appear as if all America had become frenzied in supporting his candidacy. He went at once to the Congress Hotel; and, stepping out upon a balcony, he made a brief speech in which he branded his opponents as thieves. Then followed two days of wild excitement in which rumors flew thick and fast, when the Progressive headquarters in the Congress Hotel seemed to be a bedlam of speech-making, band-playing, parading of delegates, and cheering that knew no end for Roosevelt, who himself was spoken of as the "Big Noise."

Then, on Monday evening, June 17, the day before the opening of the convention, a huge rally of Progressives was planned in the Auditorium Theater. Five thousand persons

wedged their way into the building, and many more than that number stood patiently in the street cheering themselves hoarse and echoing the applause that was heard from within.

At first, Senator Borah and the Chairman of the Roosevelt campaign committee addressed the crowd and brought forth thunderous applause; but, when the idol of the Progressives himself appeared, the uproar of applause seemed to break all precedents. This cheering was then interrupted by the singing of *America,* but was resumed thereafter without any prospect of cessation, until the Colonel came forward with a beaming smile and outstretched arms that demanded silence.

Such a speech as Roosevelt delivered on this occasion has seldom been heard. As his biographer has said, it was a torrential outburst of passion and eloquence, expressing righteous indignation and a determination not to submit to injustice. Again and again, he repeated the charge of theft against his opponents, and was applauded by cries from the audience of "Bully for you!"—"Hit 'em hard!"—"Go at 'em!" —"Knock out the steam-roller!"—while thousands were content to shout, at every pause, the only thought that was on their minds, "Teddy—Teddy—Teddy!"

This speech, perhaps, would sink into oblivion like many others, however, had it not been for the high and impassioned eloquence of its peroration, in which Roosevelt maintained that the struggle was one in which no one should be spared, in which men were to offer themselves with all that they had, to spend and be spent, for the great cause; that, in fact, we had come to "Armageddon" and must "battle for the Lord!"

The effect of this speech was felt in the convention that followed, in the course that was taken by Roosevelt's progressive followers, in the open split that came between factions of the Republican party, in the calling of another convention for

Progressives of all parties, in the violent campaign that ensued, and in the ultimate election of President Wilson over Roosevelt, his principal competitor, with Taft polling an electoral vote that was almost negligible.

By this speech, Roosevelt so bound his followers to him, that, throughout the tumultuous convention that followed, they made it plain that they would fight to the last ditch against seating delegates whose claims were fraudulent, and that, if a nomination were made by the votes of such delegates, it would not be binding upon the party.

Such a nomination was made, however, and it was therefore necessary to carry out the threat of the Progressives. With Roosevelt as their own candidate—the candidate of a third party—they carried on the fight, with enthusiasm that sometimes resembled religious frenzy or religious exaltation; and, through it all, they remembered devoutly the impassioned words of their idolized leader: "We stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord."

Theodore Roosevelt: The Armageddon Speech

June 17, 1912

My Friends and Fellow-Citizens: I address you as my fellow-Republicans, but I also and primarily address you as fellow-Americans, fellow-citizens; for this has now become much more than an ordinary party fight. The issue is both simpler and larger than that involved in the personality of any man, or than that involved in any factional or in any ordinary party contest.

It is not a partisan issue; it is more than a political issue; it is a great moral issue. If we condone political theft, if we do not resent the kinds of wrong and injustice that injuriously

affect the whole nation, not merely our democratic form of government, but our civilization can not endure.

Tonight, we come together to protest against a crime which strikes straight at the heart of every principle of political decency and honesty, a crime which represents treason to the people and the usurpation of the sovereignty of the people by irresponsible political bosses, inspired by the sinister influences of moneyed privilege.

We are against privilege. We believe in striking down every bulwark of privilege. And, above all, we are against the evil alliance of special privilege in business, with special business in politics. We believe in giving the people a free hand to work in efficient fashion for true justice. To the big man and to the little man, in all the relations of life, we pledge justice and fair dealing.

A period of change is upon us. Our opponents, the men of inaction, ask us to stand still. But we could not stand still if we would. We must either go forward or go backward. Never was the need more imperative than now for men of vision who are also men of action.

Disaster is ahead of us if we trust to the leadership of men whose souls are seared and whose eyes are blinded, men of cold heart and narrow mind, who believe we can find safety in dull timidity and dull inaction. The unrest can not be quieted by ingenious trickery of those who profess to advance by merely marking time, or who seek to drown the cry for justice by loud and insincere clamor about issues that are false and issues that are dead.

The trumpets sound the advance, and their appeal can not be drowned by repeating the war-cries of bygone battles, the victory shouts of vanished hosts. Here, in this city of the State of Lincoln, I can set forth the principles for which we

stand today in the words which Lincoln used fifty-four years ago, when in speaking at that time of the eternal struggle between privilege and justice, between the rights of the many and the special interest of the few, he said:

"That is the real issue. That is the issue which will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time. The one is the common right of humanity, the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it envelops itself. It is the same spirit that says, 'You toil and work and earn bread, and I will eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who bestrides the people of his own nation and who lives from the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle."

Were Lincoln alive today, he would add that it is also the same principle which is now at stake when we fight on behalf of the many against the oppressor in modern industry, whether the abuse of special privilege be by a man whose wealth is great or is little, whether by the multi-millionaire owner of railways and mines and factories who forgets his duties to those who earn his bread while earning their own, or by the owner of the foul little sweatshop who coins dollars from the excessive and underpaid labor of haggard women.

We who stand for the cause of progress are fighting to make this country a better place to live in for those who have been harshly treated by fate; and, if we succeed, it will also be a better place for those who are well off.

None of us can really prosper permanently if masses of our

fellows are debased and degraded, if they are ground down and forced to live starved and sordid lives, so that their souls are crippled like their bodies and the fine edge of their every feeling blunted.

We ask that those of our people to whom fate has been kind shall remember that each is his brother's keeper, and that all of us whose veins thrill with abounding vigor shall feel our obligation to the less fortunate who work wearily beside us in the strain and stress of our eager modern life.

Friends, here in Chicago, at this time, you have a great task before you. I wish you to realize deep in your hearts that you are not merely facing a crisis in the history of a party. You are facing a crisis in the history of a nation; and what you do will have an appreciable effect throughout the world at large.

We stand for the cause of the uplift of humanity and the betterment of mankind. We are pledged to eternal war against wrong, whether by the few or the many, by a plutocracy or by a mob. We believe that this country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in, unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in.

The sons of all of us will pay in the future, if we of the present do not do justice to all in the present. Our cause is the cause of justice for all in the interest of all. The present contest is but a phase of the larger struggle. Assuredly, the fight will go on, whether we win or lose; but it will be a sore disaster to lose. What happens to me is not of the slightest consequence. I am to be used, as in a doubtful battle any man is used, to his hurt or not, so long as he is useful, and is then cast aside or left to die.

I wish you to feel this. I mean it; and I shall need no sympathy when you are through with me; for this fight is

far too great to permit us to concern ourselves about any one man's welfare. If we are true to ourselves by putting far above our own interests the triumph of the high cause for which we battle, we shall not lose.

It would be far better to fail honorably for the cause we champion than it would be to win by foul methods—the foul victory for which our opponents hope.

But the victory shall be ours, and it shall be won, as we have already won so many victories, by clean and honest fighting for the loftiest of causes.

We fight in honorable fashion for the good of mankind; fearless of the future, unheeding of our individual fates, with unflinching hearts and undimmed eyes; we stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord.

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For biographies of Beveridge, Borah, Dolliver, Johnson, and Root see encyclopaedias.

Collateral Studies of Speech-Texts

On Roosevelt's *The Man with the Muck-Rake*

I. What was the date of the laying of the corner-stone of the Capitol at Washington?

II. How long was it before Washington developed into a beautiful and populous city?—What was its environment in Madison's time?—in Jackson's time?—in Lincoln's time?—See Elson's *Hist. of U. S.,* 375; Goodwin's *Dolly Madison,* 79-83; Bowers's *Party Battles of the Jackson Period,* 1-11; Dickens's *American Notes* (1842) Chap. VIII; descriptions of Lincoln's first inauguration.

III. What were the underlying facts of human nature that were the same in Washington's time as in Roosevelt's time?—See Irving's *Life of Washington,* Vol. V, Chap. 31, last paragraphs.

IV. What is the story concerning (1) people becoming weary of hearing Aristides called *The Just*—See Plutarch's *Lives;* (2) the efforts of the government to procure men to build the Panama Canal?

V. In what part of *Pilgrim's Progress* does the story of the Man with the Muck-Rake occur?

On Roosevelt's *The Armageddon Speech*

I. What internal evidence is there that Roosevelt was familiar with: (1) Bryan's *Cross of Gold Speech;* (2) *Genesis,* 4:9; (3) *Revelations,* 16-16?

II. What were: (1) the political theft of which Roosevelt spoke—See Bishop, II, 320-333; (2) the speech of Lincoln from which Roosevelt quoted; (3) Armageddon—See Bailey and Kent's *Hebrew Commonwealth,* 77.

III. Who were: (1) the so-called "dull, blind, narrow, timid" men, whose leadership Roosevelt repudiated; (2) the "false or dead" issues to which Roosevelt referred; (3) the multi-millionaire owners of railways—of mines—of factories to whom Roosevelt referred?

IV. How was the prophecy of Roosevelt fulfilled, that "a period of change is upon us"?

Dictionary Studies from Theodore Roosevelt

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. celestial 2. deterrent 3. epidemic 4. feats 5. flinch 6. gross 7. hysterical 8. immunity 9. interested 10. knavery 11. lurid 12. mendacity 13. morbid 14. premium 15. reckless 16. slander 17. whit.

1. condone 2. haggard 3. imperative 4. incitement 5. plutocracy 6. seared 7. sinister 8. stump 9. sweatshop 10. white-washing.

CHAPTER XXI

WOODROW WILSON

The Place of Wilson among Political Orators of the Period of the World War

Woodrow Wilson, in the second decade of the twentieth century, like Theodore Roosevelt in the first, was the great, dominating figure in American political oratory. In many respects, the complete antithesis of Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, nevertheless, in one important respect, resembled strongly his recent predecessor in the presidency; for both Wilson and Roosevelt were spokesmen of reform, shunning the ultra-radical element in their respective parties, but at the same time forcing the ultra-conservative elements in these parties to enact great blocks of Progressive legislation. What Roosevelt was to the ultra-radical LaFollette, Wilson was to the ultra-radical Bryan. And what Roosevelt did in bringing the Progressive element to dominate the Republican party, Wilson duplicated in bringing that same element to dominate the policies of the Democratic party.

The one great, outstanding difference between these two powerful leaders of public opinion was to be found in their foreign policy. Both achieved distinction for their labors in behalf of universal peace; both, for example, were recipients of the famous Nobel Peace Prize; but Roosevelt won this prize while advocating isolation, arbitration, and military preparedness; whereas Wilson won it while advocating international co-operation, a league to enforce peace, and a program of universal disarmament.

By the irony of fate, Woodrow Wilson, the pacifistic statesman, became the great spokesman of American idealism during the most devastating war in the world's history. Elected on a platform for Progressive reform in respect to America's internal problems, Woodrow Wilson was forced, before the expiration of his first term, to become the organizer of American sentiment in respect to reforms in our foreign policy that were more far-reaching and revolutionary than any that had ever been proposed since the formation of the government.

In the year 1914, when President Wilson had just completed his work of pushing through Congress an elaborate program of domestic reform in Federal legislation, the great World War broke out in Europe. An Austrian arch-duke was assassinated in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Russia and France began to mobilize. Germany came to the assistance of Austria. Efforts to prevent a general conflagration broke down. German armies invaded the neutralized territory of Belgium, overran that kingdom, and began a terrific drive against France. Great Britain came to the assistance of her allies, France and Russia; Bulgaria and Turkey joined the alliance of Central Europe; and Italy, after some delay, joined the so-called Entente Allies, to form a ring of steel around the Central Powers. Never since the time of Napoleon had Europe witnessed such a cataclysm of war. The Napoleonic wars, in fact, were dwarfed by comparison with this great uprising of nations in arms.

What was to be the attitude of America? So far as Bryan was concerned—and Bryan's attitude was important, because he was Wilson's first Secretary-of-State—the policy of America was to be one of "peace-at-any-price." So far as Roosevelt was concerned—and his attitude was important, because he was the most conspicuous leader of militant nationalism—the

policy of America was to be that we should throw in our lot with the Entente Allies at once against Germany to avenge the wrongs of Belgium. So far as the moneyed interests were concerned—and they were still powerful in both parties, especially throughout the East—the policy of America was to sell as much ammunition and war material as possible to the Entente Allies. And so far as the vast population of German-Americans was concerned—a population that exerted a powerful influence especially in the Middle West—the policy of America was to deny to the Entente Allies whatever could not be provided in like measure to the Central Powers. But so far as President Wilson was concerned—and, after all, his attitude, for the most part, determined public sentiment—the policy of America was to preserve a strict neutrality "in word, deed, and thought"; to seize every opportunity to extend our good offices for the re-establishment of peace; and to promote in every way a project to use this war as a means to organize a league of nations against all future wars.

Had the European War been of short duration, President Wilson might easily have maintained his policy of disinterested neutrality; but, contrary to expectations, it developed into a protracted life-and-death struggle. The naval blockade, established by the Entente Allies, gradually threatened to undermine the German power. Retaliatory measures were, therefore, undertaken by the Germans. Incendiarism and labor troubles were fomented in American munition factories to check the flow of war materials to Germany's enemies. Plots were hatched to involve us in war with Mexico. And a ruthless submarine warfare was declared upon all shipping in a restricted, or barred, zone, off the shores of Great Britain and France, and in the Mediterranean.

This ruthless submarine warfare first turned the tide of

sentiment in America overwhelmingly toward the Entente Allies. Beginning with the sinking of the *Lusitania,* on May 7, 1915, ship after ship, carrying American citizens and American goods, was sent to the bottom without warning and without effort to save the survivors. With every disaster, a fresh explosion of wrath occurred in America. A seemingly endless succession of diplomatic notes was sent to Germany in an effort to obtain a cessation of ruthless methods in submarine warfare. From time to time, promises of reform were obtained; then withdrawn; then given once more; and finally withdrawn altogether.

For two years after the sinking of the *Lusitania,* President Wilson exercised an almost superhuman forbearance; while he attempted to perform the double rôle of preserving peace and of maintaining our rights at home and on the high seas. And, throughout all this time, he was subjected to the hot fire of censure; first, by the war party for his pacifism, and then by the peace party for his belligerency.

Gradually he was driven by the course of events, by the necessity of making good his intermittent threats against Germany, and by the clamor of the war party to abandon his position of complete neutrality; to favor, in its stead, a program of armed neutrality and of military preparedness; and, at last, under extreme provocation, to advocate actual war to the hilt against Germany in co-operation with the Entente Allies.

On April 2, 1917, President Wilson went before Congress and asked for a declaration of war. On April 7, war was declared. Then began a tumult of tardy preparation. Troops were to be raised. Ships were to be built. Loans were to be floated. Transportation was to be organized. Munition factories were to be expanded. Food was to be produced and

conserved. Fuel, clothing, and every necessity of life must be provided for ourselves and for our Allies.

Seldom had such a gigantic task fallen upon the American people; but almost overnight the response was made and the task accomplished. Only the appearance of American troops on the firing line seemed to lag. Long training was necessary, and much time was required to get our armies overseas. At last, however, in 1918, they began to appear as separate divisions at the front. In the great onward movement that marked the turning point in the tide of war, they took a conspicuous and glorious part. With their coming, the fate of Germany was sealed. On November 11, 1918, an armistice was signed; and soon, thereafter, the historic Peace Conference at Versailles assembled to negotiate a just and lasting peace.

In this Conference, President Wilson appeared as the principal spokesman for America. Long before, he had outlined for the world, in his famous fourteen points, the principles upon which he believed the peace should be established. Day after day, he labored manfully to see these points incorporated in the treaty; but, day after day, he found it necessary to concede to his allies one point after another, in order that he might secure his most cherished goal, the establishment of a league of nations to prevent future wars.

At last, he emerged from the Conference. He had achieved this one great purpose. Returning to America, he placed the treaty before the Senate. For weeks and months, he labored with that body to secure its approval for the terms of peace. But all to no avail. The great War President was on the point of being deserted by his own people. He had a premonition of disaster; and, characteristically, he took his cause directly, over the heads of the Senate, to the American people. In a great speech-making campaign, he toured the country from coast to coast to revive support for his idealism. But

again he found that the people had fallen away from the heights of his exalted leadership. No longer could they be inspired with his vision of future peace by schemes for international co-operation. From such a program of foreign entanglement, they desired unmistakably to retreat, and, under the banner of nationalism, to seek safety in the age-old policy of isolation.

Crushed by the strain of his endeavor, Wilson returned to Washington a broken man. His idealism was shattered. His treaty was rejected. His party was ousted from the government. Under a new administration, a separate peace with Germany was negotiated; the broken threads of his diplomacy were taken up; and the effort to obtain universal peace was once more undertaken, not through a comprehensive project for a league of nations, but through projects for periodic conferences on disarmament, and through proposals for adherence, under limitations, to the World Court, which had been established in connection with the League of Nations.

Such, in brief, is the history of the two administrations of Woodrow Wilson, when, beyond the shadow of a doubt, he was the foremost political orator of America—at first the great orator of reform; then the foremost orator for complete neutrality; later the reluctant advocate of preparedness and war; and finally the brilliant and forceful spokesman for international good-will and understanding in behalf of a league of nations to promote universal peace.

Though, by all odds, Woodrow Wilson was the foremost political orator of the period of the World War, he was not, by any means, the only orator to catch the public ear in this period of frenzied agitation. Against him, from the beginning, in favor of preparedness and war, were Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, whose utterances in condemnation of his peace policies burned and seared the public conscience.

Against him, also, for his vacillating foreign policy, in the campaign year of 1916, were the Republican key-note speakers, Elihu Root, and the Republican presidential candidate, Charles Evans Hughes. Only in 1917, when he asked for a declaration of war, did he have with him the almost unanimous support of great contemporary orators, including Roosevelt and Lodge, Root and Hughes, the venerable Joseph H. Choate, Franklin K. Lane, James M. Beck, Thomas R. Marshall, and William E. Borah. Yet, even at this time, he was opposed most strenuously by such pacifist orators as William J. Bryan and Robert M. LaFollette. Then, when the great battle of his lifetime came, to secure the ratification of his peace treaty, which included the Covenant of the League of Nations, he had the support of such scholarly orators as Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock, William Howard Taft and A. Lawrence Lowell; but against him, in the field of political oratory was arrayed the talent and power of such speakers as Henry Cabot Lodge, William E. Borah, and Hiram W. Johnson. Even his political opponents, however, could not wholly disregard the goals of his foreign policy; and hence, after his retirement, such other speakers as Warren G. Harding and Charles Evans Hughes took up the task of reviving the crushed and broken spirit of international good-will.

Small, indeed, however, will be the permanent fame of these other political orators during the World War period of American history, as compared with that of Woodrow Wilson. Each, in turn, to be sure, had his period of influence; but none so continuously and so brilliantly moulded public sentiment in the service of high ideals as did Woodrow Wilson, whose untiring efforts were given to the project of converting the frenzy of war into a gigantic crusade for peace, good-will, and better understanding among the nations of the world.

The Life of Woodrow Wilson

Woodrow Wilson, America's war-time President, has often been called the chief exponent of American scholarship and American idealism in practical politics. An ardent reformer both in the domestic, and in the foreign, policies of the nation, he was trusted and feared, loved and hated, revered and scorned, for his championship of the cause of universal peace and better understanding among the nations of the world. By partisan followers, he was hailed as a statesman, whose name should be placed with those of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, and whose influence in history would be comparable to that of Washington and Lincoln; while, at the same time, by partisan opponents, he was denounced as a timid, vacillating leader, with a "one-track mind," whose impractical idealism would sacrifice to the evil machinations of European diplomacy all that America held dear, its independence, its patriotism, its security, and its prestige, as a leading nation among the great world powers.

Whatever may be the verdict of history, however, upon the baffling questions that surround the character and personality of Wilson, the present generation may be sure of this one point at least: that, during the period of his two administrations, he was not only one of the foremost statesmen of the world, but also a world-renowned orator, whose eloquence crushed the morale of militaristic empires, and bespoke the righteous aspirations of down-trodden peoples, throughout the earth, even among the remote tribes of the desert, and in the far-off islands of the sea.

This conspicuous statesman and powerful political orator was born in Staunton, Virginia, in 1856, the son of a Presbyterian clergyman, who, two years later, removed with his

family to Augusta, Georgia. The boyhood and youth of Woodrow Wilson were spent, therefore, in a region that witnessed the terrible tumult and havoc of the Civil War, with the subsequent disaster of carpetbag government in the days of reconstruction; but, strange to say, Wilson imbibed from his surroundings none of the fierce passions of sectional hatred, and strove only to understand the historic forces at play, with a desire to unite them for the fulfillment of his democratic ideals.

After studying for one year at Davidson College, in North Carolina, he entered Princeton, and graduated with the class of 1879. He immediately began the study of law at the University of Virginia; and, on being admitted to the bar, he undertook, for a single year, in 1882 and 1883, to practice his profession in Atlanta, Georgia. Law, however, was distasteful to him except in its philosophical aspects; hence, he prepared himself for the teaching profession by graduate study at Johns-Hopkins University. Receiving his doctorate of philosophy in 1885, he began his long career as a teacher by an appointment as lecturer in Johns-Hopkins; and, thereafter, he occupied chairs in history, political economy, and jurisprudence, at Bryn Mawr, Connecticut Wesleyan, and Princeton.

In 1902, he was chosen as the first non-clerical president of Princeton University; and, for eight years, in that capacity, he strove to inculcate democratic ideals in the life of the campus, and to promote much-needed reform by the establishment of a preceptorial system of instruction.

When, at last, the bitterness of college politics in opposition to his policies was fast developing a crisis, he was nominated in 1910 by the Democratic party as the reform candidate for the governorship of New Jersey; and, after an exciting canvass, he was elected by a decisive majority to that office.

His record as a reform-governor presents one of the most outstanding achievements in the history of State governments during that period; for, within two years, against the opposition of powerful political bosses, he brought about reforms relating to direct primaries, a public service commission, commission government, the civil service, the State school-system, corrupt practices, the incorporation of trusts, hours of labor for women, indeterminate sentences, widows' pensions, and scientific poor relief.

While still governor, in 1912, he was nominated and elected by the Democrats to the presidency of the United States; and, in that office, during the first two years of his first administration, he immediately duplicated his previous remarkable record for achievements in reform.

Not only did he bring about a quick reduction in the tariff, but he also secured the passage of laws creating the Federal Reserve System, a system of rural credits, a Federal Trade Commission, and a tariff-board; with other laws against child-labor, for an Alaskan railway, repealing toll-exemptions for American vessels in the Panama Canal, promising independence to the Philippines, and establishing a Federal income-tax.

Seldom before has the work of any administration been more highly praised than that of Wilson in his first two years of office; but, soon, this praise was changed to scorn on the part of many for his alleged weakness in dealing with our foreign relations. Both in Mexico and in Europe a trying situaton arose through the destruction of American lives and property during successive Mexican revolutions, and during attacks upon neutral commerce by European belligerents in the first years of the World War. For his policy of "watchful waiting" in Mexico, Wilson was severely criticised and ridiculed by a large portion of the American people; but for his

policy of "neutrality in word, deed, and thought" toward the European belligerents, and for his statement about being "too proud to fight" after the *Lusitania* disaster, he was not only severely criticised and ridiculed, but he was also denounced and scorned by numberless people throughout the country.

During his diplomatic correspondence with Germany, he was admired and condemned alternately by his opponents, who approved each threat that he uttered and who disapproved his failure to act or to make preparations for action after his successive threats to hold Germany to a strict accountability for its attacks upon our commerce in its submarine warfare.

Throughout all this period of note-writing, however, Wilson's policy, or lack of policy, was applauded to the echo by members of his own party in the South and West, and by all enthusiastic advocates of peace; and, though at last he was driven to make strenuous efforts for half-hearted preparedness, in the presidential campaign of 1916 he was supported and elected by those who admired him for keeping us out of war.

Great was the irony of this presidential contest, however; for Wilson, himself, never promised that he would keep us out of war at any cost; and, even before his second inauguration in March, 1917, he became more and more enmeshed in the European struggle.

When, at last, he had unearthed plots of the Austrian and German embassies to embroil us in domestic anarchy and foreign war with Mexico, and when his last ultimatum on German submarine attacks was answered by further outrages, he severed diplomatic relations with the Central Powers, asked Congress to authorize the armament of our merchant vessels, and then in a final burst of eloquent indignation led the nation into war.

Scorning the idea that the war was one of revenge, he

immediately raised it to the level of a great crusade, inspiring not only his own people but all the peoples of the world as well, with the thought that this was a war to end war; that it was a war to make "the world safe for democracy"; and that it was a war of liberation, on the principle of "self-determination," for all oppressed peoples and down-trodden nationalities.

This was the high ideal that Wilson held constantly before the world in all his utterances; this was the high ideal that gradually crushed the morale of the Central Powers; and this was the ideal that Wilson took with him to the Peace Conference in Paris at the termination of the war.

Such an ideal, however, was insufficient to command the permanent allegiance of European and American statesmen. At the Peace Conference, Wilson could obtain little more than his one cherished goal, a covenant for a league of nations; but, triumphant in this attainment, he returned buoyantly to America to seek from the Senate a ratification of the treaty to which he had subscribed.

Never in our history has America descended so quickly from the heights of a lofty idealism to the utmost depths of groveling party strife as it did on this occasion. Refusing to ratify the treaty without reservations in the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Republican party in the Senate entered immediately upon a battle royal to defeat the treaty and to overthrow both the President and the Democratic party in the forthcoming presidential contest of 1920.

Nothing daunted by the opposition he encountered, President Wilson took his cause directly to the people, and succeeded partially in stemming the tide of popular sentiment against the treaty. The great strain of this last titanic effort, however, added to the strain of his recent heroic labors at the peace table, was too much for his already undermined phy-

sique; and, though battling bravely to the very end against the orders of his physician, he at last collapsed, and returned to Washington, stricken with paralysis, and unable to undertake further any active leadership in the struggle for ratifying the treaty.

No tragedy in history is more pathetic than President Wilson's losing fight on behalf of his great ideal; for, within a few brief months, he descended from a position in which he was hailed as arbiter of the world's destinies, to a position in which only a minority of his own people were willing to pay him homage.

Confined to his bed, he was compelled to witness the defeat of his treaty in the Senate; and still unable to appear in public, he saw with sorrow the overthrow of his policies and his party in the elections of 1920; but brave and hopeful to the end, through four more years of suffering in quiet retirement, he gained even from his opponents some meed of admiration, and held, throughout it all, the veneration of those who had shared his vision.

The feeble old man, in these latter days supporting himself with difficulty on a cane, and sometimes appearing momentarily to pilgrims who sought his home as a shrine, served to recall in a pathetic way the former majesty of him who had swayed the world by his chaste and scholarly eloquence.

To many, this apparition recalled the times when President Wilson, as an instructor, had charmed large audiences of students in his lecture hall at Princeton by the beautiful cadence of his voice and by his power to arouse and persuade the intellect through the clarity and orderliness of his talk, brightened always by bland humor and tingling wit. To others, it recalled the times when President Wilson, as a reform candidate in State or national campaigns, swayed hundreds and

thousands by his beautifully constructed impromptu stump-speeches from the rear platforms of special trains, or in the tremendous auditoriums of convention halls throughout the country. But to most, it must have recalled the times, when like an inspired prophet, he stood before the assembled representatives of the nation in the halls of Congress, and, quietly speaking words of counsel and exhortation, delivered, there, immortal messages that shook the thrones of tyrants and raised the hopes of millions throughout the civilized world.

The position that Woodrow Wilson will occupy permanently in the history of his country cannot be determined until time has provided a proper perspective upon his achievements; but, even now, it may be fair to say of him, as his eulogist did in Congress: that he "evoked no such popular devotion as did Henry Clay, or James G. Blaine, or Theodore Roosevelt. . . . . As an executive, he was not an incarnation of action like Napoleon or Roosevelt. . . . . But his ambition to serve his country was as intense as that of Cromwell. . . . . He was willing to die, and he did die, to guarantee to humble men a fairer chance in a juster world. . . . . As death enfolded him in its shadows, men came to comprehend that a man of great faith had lived in their era, and that a prophet had guided their country and stirred the heart of mankind in an hour of destiny."

These were the words of one of Wilson's disciples. They may throw upon their subject the ultimate light of truth; but when, to these words, others of like tenor are added from President Coolidge, a Republican, then, at least, a fair contemporary estimate of Wilson may be obtained.

At the time of Wilson's death in February, 1924, President Coolidge said of him, in a proclamation to the people of the United States, that, as President, Mr. Wilson "was moved by

an earnest desire to promote the best interests of the country as he conceived them. His acts were prompted by high motives and his sincerity of purpose can not be questioned. He led the nation through the terrific struggle of the World War with a lofty idealism which never failed him. He gave utterance to the aspirations of humanity with an eloquence which held the attention of all the earth, and made America a new and enlarged influence in the destiny of mankind."

Historical Setting of Wilson's War Message

The War Message to Congress of President Wilson, delivered on April 2, 1917, is one of the great state papers of the world's history; and, at the same time, it is a sublime masterpiece of scholarly eloquence that will always rank among the world's greatest orations—an address that resembles Lincoln's *Second Inaugural* in its spirit of "malice toward none, with charity for all," but "with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right." Not since the beginning of time had the utterance of any statesman given to so many millions throughout the world such a message of hope for deliverance from oppression and from strife; and, never since Lincoln had any American statesman expressed so clearly and so fervently the American spirit of idealism, reluctantly entering upon war to end all war, and to elevate its horrors from the sordid plane of brutal rancor and revenge to the higher plane of a crusade for justice and humanity—to "make the world safe for democracy," to spread the doctrine that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," and to create "a universal dominion of right by a concert of free peoples" that should "bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."

This speech, suggesting a complete reversal of Woodrow Wilson's attitude toward the World War, yet thoroughly consistent with every previous utterance of his political philosophy, if these utterances are carefully examined, was brought forth in one of those great international crises which "Tom" Paine would have described as "a time that tries men's souls."

Most valiantly, Woodrow Wilson had striven, in the face of bitter calumny and reproach, to keep us out of the European conflict, to maintain our neutrality, to assert our rights, to prepare reasonably against eventualities, and to bring peace among the warring nations before we became involved; but, gradually, in spite of all his efforts, he found that the nation was being drawn by swirling eddies and back-currents into the very vortex of the gigantic maelstrom.

He had declared, at first, that we must be neutral "in word, and deed, and thought"; he had protested with equal vigor against encroachment on our rights by Great Britain and Germany; he had spoken of "such a thing as being too proud to fight"; and he had pleaded for "a peace without victory." He had threatened in February, 1915, to hold Germany to "a strict accountability" for the acts of its submarine commanders; he had said in July, 1915, after the *Lusitania* tragedy, that a repetition of the outrage would be construed as "deliberately unfriendly"; he had demanded an abandonment of Germany's methods in submarine warfare, with a threat of breaking off diplomatic relations, in April, 1916, after the sinking of the *Sussex;* and he had been compelled to carry out this threat, when, on February 1, 1917, the German government announced its intention to resume an unrestricted and ruthless submarine warfare on Allied and neutral commerce within a barred zone about the British Isles.

He had been patient almost beyond endurance, while constantly he was being made aware of the fact that German spies and German propaganda were seeking to throw us into war against Great Britain, to turn our neutrality, by an embargo on arms, into a weapon against Great Britain, and to foment strikes and to plant bombs in our munition factories, on our railroads, and on the ships in our harbors, in order that we might not engage in legitimate trade with Great Britain and her allies.

All this he endured with patient remonstrance, until, on February 3, 1917, he broke off relations with Germany. Then, while peace societies of every kind were dogging his footsteps, he determined to maintain an armed neutrality by placing guns upon our merchantmen. He asked of Congress the right to put this measure into effect; and, after witnessing a prolonged filibuster against it led by LaFollette, he himself gave orders, on his own authority, to see that our vessels went armed for protection against submarine attack.

At the time of his second inauguration on March 5, 1917, Wilson still hoped that peace might be preserved, though he was disturbed by the disclosures that Germany had been intriguing with Mexico and with Japan to attack us in case war became imminent. Throughout the month of March, his mind was torn by divided counsel; but, gradually, it began to settle upon the necessity of war. The revolution that took place during that month in Russia inspired him to believe that, at last, the Allies presented a solid front of democracy against autocracy, thereby paving the way for America's entrance into the war against Germany. In company with all the great democracies of the world, surely America would not be out of place; but still Wilson hesitated through his instinctive horror of war.

What finally turned his mind unalterably to join this nation to the Allies will never be definitely known; but one of his biographers has said, that, being "conscious of a united public opinion and being resentful of the violation of American rights, he determined to enter the contest because he believed, first, that the United States must aid the Allies to win, and second, that the entrance of the United States into the war was the surest means of forcing peace."

On March 21, 1917, the President issued a summons for Congress to meet in extraordinary session on April 2, "to receive a communication concerning grave matters of national policy which should be taken under immediate consideration." Everybody jumped to the conclusion that this meant war in all probability; but the President himself was not sure what he should recommend until ten days later. He dreaded the declaration; and, hoping against hope, he put it off to the last moment. On the night of March 31, however, his biographer says, that "he felt definitely the end of peace was at hand. He was restless in his bed, got up, went out on the south veranda of the White House, took his little typewriter with him. Mrs. Wilson heard him, and quietly went to the kitchen, put a bowl of milk and crackers by his side and left him. There, in the early morning, he wrote his war note. All day, it was with him, and he considered it carefully, perhaps changing it here and there as men do, who hold an important manuscript with them during many hours of crisis. He sent for his friend, Frank Cobb, of the New York *World*. Cobb was delayed in coming. At one o'clock in the morning, Cobb found the President in his office."

As Cobb reported, he had never seen the President so worn down. The President said he was going to ask Congress the next day to declare war; but he had never been so uncertain of

a decision in his life. For nights, he had been lying awake going over the whole situation and he could see no alternative. He said he knew exactly what war meant; that we should go war-mad; that in the end we should lose all our peace-time standards; that we should have to create a spirit of ruthless brutality and intolerance; that he would strive against it; but that, before the war closed, the Constitution might be shattered and the right of free speech and of assembly might be gone. No nation, he said, could put its strength into war and keep its head level; it never had been done. Was there no alternative? For himself, he could see none. He would rather do anything than head a military machine. All his instincts were against it. He knew exactly what the result would be on his own fortunes—at first, adulation following victory, and then derision and attack following the deflation of excessive hopes and in the presence of world responsibility. But, if he had to do it over again, he would take the same course. It was only a choice of evils.

In this way, Woodrow Wilson braced himself for his task of addressing Congress the next day. He waited until evening for both Houses to organize, and all day long he heard reports of disturbances in the city, as pacifist organizations, recruited by thousands from every State of the Union, attempted to make demonstrations against war. Every Senator and Congressman was to be interviewed by them; and, as they forced their way against the police into the Senate and House Office Buildings, many a fist fight occurred. Some Senators refused to see them. The Vice President was forced to have them ejected from his office; and Senator Lodge, being insulted by one of them in his office, boldly struck him down and put him out. By nightfall, however, the authorities had eliminated all possibility of disturbance; and troops of cavalry, assisted

by swarms of secret service men, were on guard to protect the Capitol and its approaches from these friends of peace.

When, at eight-thirty in the evening, President Wilson came by automobile through the crowded streets from the White House to the Capitol, the scene was indescribably dramatic. Multitudes of people were pouring down the avenues toward the Capitol, and there, against an inky sky, were etched the terraces, and pillars, and dome of the stately structure, blazing white in the glare of more than a hundred searchlights, while near the top of the dome were four flags, fluttering before a stiff breeze, with their stars and stripes brilliantly illumined by skillfully directed shafts of light.

Inside the building, which was surrounded by troops of cavalry in dress-uniform and with drawn sabers, both Houses of Congress were preparing to receive the President. In the Hall of Representatives, Congressmen, cabinet officials, members of the diplomatic corps, and justices of the Supreme Court were gathered. When the doors were opened, the Senate entered and marched down the center aisle to the seats allotted them, each man, save two or three, carrying or wearing an American flag.

The President was the last to arrive, and the cheers that greeted him were deafening. A deep silence followed. Then, after being presented to the tense assemblage by Speaker Clark, he drew from his coat pocket his prepared address, and began to read the fateful words that were to bring the United States into the great World War.

As he stood there, turning the pages of his manuscript, he was visibly nervous and his fingers trembled. His face was pale. His voice was neither strong nor clear, and he seemed to be deeply affected by the awfulness of his task.

His distinguished audience listened in profound silence as he

developed America's case without bluster and without rancor; and there was no applause until he said, that "we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated."

Before he had finished this sentence, his fifteen hundred auditors knew that he purposed war, and instantaneously they burst into a terrific uproar of applause.

A moment later, when he declared that the recent course of the German government was nothing less than war against the United States, they broke all bonds of restraint. Senators on both sides of the chamber stood in their seats and waved silken flags. Members of the House joined. But it was noticeable that Senator Stone and Senator LaFollette did not rise.

As the President continued to read, Democrats and Republicans interrupted constantly with cheers, and only Senator LaFollette showed marked disapproval of what the President was saying by tossing back his head and attracting attention by a sneering laugh.

Never in the history of the United States, however, had there been in the halls of Congress such a demonstration of emotional patriotism as accompanied the President's indictment of autocracy in the Imperial German Government. Waves of applause followed one another in a rolling sea of patriotic devotion. Toward the close, many members were in tears, and even Senator LaFollette was seen vigorously applying his handkerchief to his eyes, welling with tears, as the President pronounced the affection of the American people for their neighbors of German birth.

Here and there, throughout the hall, words of approval mingled with the applause, as the President said that this war should be one to "make the world safe for democracy," and that America would fight without rancor, for no selfish ends,— not for conquest, or dominion, or indemnity,—but only

with a passionate love for the rights of mankind, to establish the ultimate peace of the world, and to liberate all peoples, both great and small, even the German people themselves from the yoke of autocratic oppression.

It was a fearful thing, the President said, to lead this great peaceful people into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars; but civilization itself seemed hanging in the balance, and right was more precious than peace.

These words brought glistening tears into the eyes of aged statesmen before him; but these tears were brushed away in the thunderous applause that greeted his concluding statement. "To such a task as this," he said, "we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness, and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

The words of this peroration suggested here and there the eloquent language of John Adams in his appeal for the Declaration of Independence; and the concluding sentence, with its tremendous emotional appeal, was an adaptation of Martin Luther's famous ejaculation, in defiance of his persecutors, as he stood against them at his trial before the Diet of Worms.

No more dramatic, however, were these earlier occasions in the history of the world's eloquence, than was this occasion when President Wilson finished his war message. A mighty cheer arose from his audience. Statesmen and leaders of both parties rushed to him to grasp his hand; and Senator Lodge, among the first, spoke for the whole people, when he said: "Mr. President, you have expressed in the loftiest manner possible the sentiments of the American people."

Almost immediately, the President emerged from the Capitol

building; and, as he descended the long flights of stairs to his waiting automobile, the newsboys were shouting, "War extra!" for newspapers that carried the full text of his speech. A deafening shout went up from the waiting thousands outside. And, as the President rode swiftly home through crowded streets, filled with cheering people, he caught in their plaudits the overpowering response of America to his request for war. Those shouts meant but one thing; the nation was sick of peace with dishonor; it was sick of two years of untold humiliation; and at last it was free from the galling yoke of a false neutrality; at last it was free to fight for the honor of the nation and the liberty of all mankind.

The President's message was hailed immediately by such men as Roosevelt with the utmost enthusiasm. It was, said he, one of the great state papers of our history, which in future years would stir the pride of American citizens. It was a call to arms that reached immediately to every heart and every home in America. It was a message of hope to despairing millions in war-ridden Europe and throughout the world. In America, it fanned into a blaze the smouldering fires of patriotism; in Germany, it struck like a catapult against the morale of the people; and, in the world-at-large, it brought a renewal of courage and a revival of faith in the ultimate preservation of human liberty.

Woodrow Wilson: The War Message to Congress

April 2, 1917

Gentlemen of the Congress: I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the third of February last, I officially laid before you

the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that, on and after the first day of February, it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean.

That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care would be taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meager and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed.

The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning, and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships, and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things

would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of domain and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meager enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded. This minimum of right, the German Government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity, and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world.

I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of non-combatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits, which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind.

It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our

motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in hesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world what our motives and our objects are. Our object is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power, and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to

be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow-men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not, and could never be, our friend is that, from the very outset of the present war, it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies, and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries and our commerce. Indeed, it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began; and it is unhappily not a matter of conjecture, but a fact proved in our courts of justice, that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of the United States.

Even in checking these things, and in trying to extirpate them, we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them, because we knew their source lay, not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people towards us (who were, no doubt, as ignorant of them as we ourselves were) but only in the selfish designs of a Government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing. But they have played their part in serving to convince us at last that that Government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors, the intercepted note to the German minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose, because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gage of battle with this natural foe to liberty, and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included; for the rights of nations, great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are

but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

Just because we fight without rancor and without selfish object, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples, we shall, I feel confident, conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and of fair play we profess to be fighting for.

It will be the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit and fairness, because we act without animus, not in enmity towards a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible government, which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck.

We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as the early re-establishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us, —however hard it may be for them, for the time being, to believe that this is spoken from our hearts. We have borne with their present government through all these bitter months because of that friendship,—exercising a patience and forbearance which would otherwise have been impossible.

We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions towards the millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live amongst us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it towards all who are in fact loyal to their neighbors and to the Government in the hour of test. They are, most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a

different mind and purpose. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with, with a firm hand of stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from the lawless and malignant few.

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, Gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts,—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task, we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

Historical Setting of Wilson's Kansas City Speech for the League of Nations

The *Kansas City Speech,* of Woodrow Wilson, for the League of Nations, was delivered in the midst of his last magnificent, yet tragic, battle to secure from the Senate the ratification of the *Treaty of Versailles,* including the *Covenant of the League,* without reservations or amendments which would alter or destroy the purpose of the original document.

After many weary weeks of fruitless effort to attain this object by conferences in Washington with irreconcilable Senators, President Wilson decided, as he expressed it, to take his "appeal to Caesar," to the millions of his fellow-countrymen whose minds were open to conviction and whose voice might be heard in the committee-rooms and halls of Congress through the press and by petition; and, not desiring in the least to evade a contest where it might be most intense and most bitter, he accordingly planned a speech-making tour across the continent, that would carry him into those States which had sent the most incorrigible opponents of the treaty to the Senate.

Only a year before this desperate expedient, Wilson had been regarded throughout America, and indeed throughout the world, as a leader of world opinion whose magic words could arouse all peoples to the highest pinnacles of idealism; but, since that time, after the cessation of hostilities and the consequent relapse from war's emotionalism, the world had sunk into an abyss of selfish intrigue and partisan bickering. The iridescent dreams of crusades for righteousness and peace and good-will had vanished; and, in their place, had come the petty strivings of ambitious men for place and power and recognition.

How much the President himself was responsible for this reaction may be judged from his lack of tact by asking in the preceding year for the election of a partisan Democratic Congress to support him in his peace plans, and by his refusal to appoint to the peace commission any prominent Republican leader or any member of the Senate.

Whatever the cause, however, the reaction from his idealism was marked and pronounced. While in Europe to negotiate the peace, he was greeted with ovations everywhere that could not have failed to turn the head of any ordinary man. By all

oppressed and suffering peoples, as well as by the war-weary nations among the Entente Allies, he was hailed as the "savior of mankind"; and, in this rôle, he fought, through intrigue and petty diplomatic wrangling, to secure the incorporation of the *Covenant of the League of Nations* in the *Treaty of Versailles* as the corner-stone of peace. But, when he returned to America in February, 1919, how sad was his reception, and how overwhelming was his great disillusionment! His own people, he found, were not altogether with him, as he had hoped and dreamed and promised. Instead, he found that there were deep suspicions that he had been tricked and duped into surrendering his ideals, and into betraying his country by offering to sacrifice its sacred independence for an impractical and perilous adventure in behalf of a Utopian world-peace.

After speaking to a tremendous audience of skeptical and cold critics of his policy in Mechanics Hall, Boston, he hastened to Washington to explain to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations his plan for a league of nations; and then, before returning to Europe to complete the negotiations for peace, he was informed by a "round-robin" of one-third of the members of the Senate, that there would be irreconcilable opposition to the proposed league, which was the dearest goal of all his dreams.

On June 28, 1919, the treaty of peace, including the *Covenant of the League of Nations,* was signed in Paris by the peace delegates of the Allied and Associated Powers and by the representatives of Germany; but, sometime before this date, a fierce debate upon the ratification of the treaty had begun in the United States Senate, when Senator Lodge reported that certain interested parties in New York City had received copies of the treaty in advance of its presentation to the Senate, and when Senator Borah attempted to read into

the *Congressional Record* a full copy of the tremendous document which he claimed to be authentic.

On July 10, the official document was sent to the Senate by the President; and, upon its reference to the hostile Committee on Foreign Relations, it immediately stirred up great strife both in and out of the Senate, with Senator Borah hurling his thunderbolts against it in Congress, and Senator Hiram Johnson fulminating against it on the stump in the New England States.

It became apparent at once that the committee intended to attach to the treaty and to the Covenant numerous amendments and reservations, which would compel the President to go back to Europe with his hat in his hand and beg both the Entente Powers and Germany to revise the whole document at the dictation of a minority in the United States Senate.

Such a thing was, of course, impossible; and President Wilson, to avoid any such humiliating result, called numerous Senators into conference, and finally invited the Foreign Relations Committee in a body on August 19, to the White House for a full and frank discussion of all mooted points.

Nothing came of this last conference, however, but further misunderstanding and bitterness; and, while the committee was preparing to report the treaty with some thirty-eight direct amendments and four important reservations, the President decided to take the case to the people on his great speech-making tour across the continent.

Arranging his itinerary so that he might talk in the States of many of his chief opponents, in the States particularly that had sent Harding, Reed, Borah, Poindexter, and Johnson to the Senate, he started out early in September to fill speaking engagements at Columbus, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Kansas

City, Des Moines, Omaha, Sioux Falls, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bismarck, Billings, Helena, Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, Tacoma, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, Reno, Salt Lake City, Cheyenne, Denver, and Pueblo.

At Columbus, Ohio, and at Indianapolis, he met a rather cold and indifferent reception, because he talked to the people in the language of the diplomat and the scholar; but, when he crossed the Mississippi, and got into the region where people were reputed to be less hidebound in their partisan prejudices, he began to receive tremendous popular demonstrations of approval that reminded him of his recent reception in Europe.

Speaking wholly extemporaneously, therefore, he began to show that he was ready to link horns with his opponents in deadly combat for his principles.

At Kansas City, on the morning of September 6, he was greeted by an audience of fifteen thousand people in the great Convention Hall, where he had formerly spoken on the subject of preparedness in 1916; and there his reception was altogther as enthusiastic as it had been on that other occasion three years before.

As he stepped to the platform, he was greeted with thunderous applause; but, waving this aside, he said to his auditors that, to alter the treaty was to impair one of the first charters of mankind. There were men, he claimed, who approached the question with passion, with private passion, with party passion, who thought only of immediate advantage to themselves, or to a group of their fellow-countrymen, who looked at the thing with the jaundiced eyes of those who had some purpose of their own. He did not mean those who had conscientious objections. He took off his hat to such. He had no intolerant spirit in the matter, but from the bottom of his feet

to the top of his head he had "a fighting spirit about it." Those who dared to defeat this great experiment must bring together the counselors of the world and do something better. If there were a better scheme, he would subscribe to it; but he wished to say, as he had said before, that "it was a case of put up or shut up." Negotiation would not save the world. Opposition constructs nothing. Opposition is the specialty of those who are bolshevistically inclined. He was not likening any of his respected colleagues to Bolshevists, but merely pointing out that the bolshevistic spirit lacked every element of constructive opposition. He had not come to fight or antagonize any individual or body of individuals. He had the greatest respect for the Senate of the United States; but he had come out to fight for a cause; and that cause was greater than the Senate, greater than the government, as great as the cause of mankind; and he intended, in office, or out, to fight that battle as long as he lived. And, then, lifting his right hand, he exclaimed, "My ancestors were troublesome Scotchmen; and among them were some of that famous group that were known as the Covenanters. Very well, there is the *Covenant of the League of Nations*. I, too, am a covenanter."

From this speech, it can be seen how vehemently the President had begun to wage his war upon the Senate; but, as he went from place to place, he became even more vehement. Some say, that, at times, he even became petulant, and seemed only to scold and fume, as his weakened nerves began to give way under the terrific strain of speaking to which he subjected them.

At last, so says William Allen White, when he had completed his engagements in the Northern tier of Rocky Mountain States and on the Pacific Coast, while he was returning through Utah and Colorado, he yielded to the entreaties of

his secretary to become more emotional and less denunciatory.

Already racked with pain and on the verge of collapse, Woodrow Wilson delivered the last speech of this tour, and almost the last of his brief remaining span of life, at Pueblo, Colorado. With tears, unbidden, streaming down his cheeks, he brought his vast audience there also to tears, as he pleaded with them to help America keep its plighted word to the soldiers who had given their last full measure of devotion that the world might be made safe against the threat of future wars.

That night, as President Wilson's train sped East for further engagements, the silver cord that bound his life to this earth seemed ready to snap. No longer could he eat, nor sleep. To quiet his shattered nerves, the train was brought to a stop; and he and Mrs. Wilson walked alone, under the stars, for an hour, on a dusty, country road. After this brief relaxation from the terrific strain of anxiety and endless speaking, they boarded the train once more for Wichita, Kansas. But the President's race was run. Something like a shock had fallen upon him. The train did not stop, as it was scheduled to do at Wichita; but, going around the Kansas town, it sped eastward, with its shutters down, to the far-away desolate home at the White House in Washington, bearing the physical wreck of the President, who had given his all in a losing battle for his ideals.

The speeches that Woodrow Wilson, a broken man, had made in his so-called "appeal to Caesar," on his great tour across the continent were almost the last public utterances to be heard from his immortal lips. They may not have been so eloquent as other magic words spoken by him during the World War; they may, indeed, have been, as some have called them, a sorrowful anti-climax; but, at least, they were the utterances of an heroic leader, fighting desperately for a great

cause. They were the words of one, who, once having set his face toward the highest goal, would not permit his eyes to be turned from it. In spite of all that carping critics may say, these speeches for the treaty and for the league were at least the ringing, eloquent words of a crusading statesman, who was about to suffer a martyrdom for what he conceived to be the salvation of the world and the regeneration of all mankind.

Woodrow Wilson: The Kansas City Speech for the League of Nations, September 6, 1919

My fellow-citizens, I came back from Paris, bringing one of the greatest documents of human history. One of the things that made it great was that it was penetrated throughout with the principles to which America has devoted her life.

Let me hasten to say that one of the most delightful circumstances of the work on the other side of the water was that I discovered that what we called American principles had penetrated to the heart and to the understanding, not only of the great peoples of Europe, but to the hearts and understandings of the great men who were representing the peoples of Europe.

I think that I can say that one of the things that America has had most at heart throughout her existence has been that there should be substituted for the brutal processes of war the friendly processes of consultation and arbitration, and *that* is done in the *Covenant of the League of Nations.* I am very anxious that my fellow-citizens should realize that that is the chief topic of the *Covenant of the League of Nations,* the greater part of its provisions.

The whole intent and purpose of the document are expressed in provisions by which all the member states agree that they

will never go to war without first having done one or the other of two things, either submitted the matter in controversy to arbitration, in which case they agree to abide by the verdict, or submitting it to discussion in the Council of the League of Nations—and for that purpose they consent to allow six months for the discussion; and, whether they like the opinion expressed or not, that they will not go to war for three months after that opinion has been expressed—so that you have, whether you get arbitration or not, nine months' discussion. And I want to remind you that that is the central principle of some thirty treaties entered into between the United States of America and some thirty other sovereign nations, all of which are confirmed by the Senate of the United States.

We have such an agreement with France; we have such an agreement with Great Britain; we have such an agreement with practically every great nation except Germany, which refused to enter into such an arrangement, because, my fellow-citizens, Germany knew that she intended something that didn't bear discussion, and that, if she had submitted the purpose which led to this war to so much as one month's discussion, she never would have dared to go into the enterprise against mankind which she finally did go into; and, therefore, I say that this principle of discussion is the principle already adopted by America.

And what is the compulsion to do this? The compulsion is this: that, if any member state violates that promise to submit either to arbitration or discussion, it is thereby *ipso facto* deemed to have committed an act of war against all the rest.

Then, you will ask, do we at once take up arms and fight them? No. We do something very much more terrible than that. We absolutely boycott them.

Let any merchant put up to himself, that if he enters into a covenant and then breaks it and the people all around absolutely desert his establishment and will have nothing to do with him, ask him, after that, if it will be necessary to send the police. The most terrible thing that can happen to any individual and the most conclusive that can happen to a nation is to be read out of decent society.

Never before has there been provided a world forum in which the legitimate grievances of peoples entitled to consideration can be brought to the common judgment of mankind. To reject the treaty, therefore, to alter the treaty, is to impair one of the first charters of mankind.

And yet there are men who approach the question with passion, with private passion and party passion; who think only of some immediate advantage to themselves or to a group of their fellow-countrymen, and who look at the thing with the jaundiced eyes of those who have some private purpose of their own. When, at last, in the annals of mankind, they are gibbeted, they will regret that the gibbet is so high.

I would not have you think that I am trying to characterize those who conscientiously object to anything in this great document. I take off my hat in the presence of any man's genuine conscience; and there are men who are conscientiously opposed to it, though they will pardon me, if I say ignorantly opposed.

I have no quarrel with them. It has been a great pleasure to confer with some of them and to tell them as frankly as I would have told my most intimate friend the whole inside of my mind and every other mind that I knew anything about, that had been concerned with the conduct of affairs at Paris, in order that they might understand this thing and go with the rest of us in the confirmation of what is necessary for the peace of the world.

I have no intolerant spirit in the matter; but I also assure you that, from the bottom of my feet to the top of my head, I have a fighting spirit about it. If anybody dares to defeat this great experiment, then he must gather together the counselors of the world and do something better.

Is it not a great vision, my fellow-citizens, this of the thoughtful world combined for peace, and this of all the great peoples of the world associated to see that justice is done, that the strong who intend wrong are restrained and that the weak who cannot defend themselves are made secure?

We have a problem ahead of us that ought to interest us in this connection. We have promised the people of the Philippine Islands that we will set them free. It has been one of our perplexities how we should make them safe after we set them free. Under this arrangement, they will be safe from the outset. They will become members of the League of Nations, and every great nation in the world will be obliged to respect and preserve against external aggression from any quarter the territorial integrity and political independence of the Philippines. It simplifies one of the most perplexing problems that has faced the American public.

But it does not simplify our problems merely, gentlemen. It illustrates the triumph of the American spirit. I do not want to attempt any flight of fancy; but I can fancy those men of the first generation, that so thoughtfully set this great government up, the generation of Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, and the Adamses—I can fancy their looking on with a sort of enraptured amazement that the American spirit should have made conquest of the world.

If anything that I have said has left the impression on your mind that I have the least doubt of the result, please dismiss the impression. And if you think I have come out on this errand to fight anybody, please dismiss that from your mind.

I have not come to fight or antagonize any individual or body of individuals.

I have, let me say, without the slightest affectation, the greatest respect for the Senate of the United States; but, my fellow-citizens, I have come out to fight for a cause. That cause is greater than the Senate; it is greater than the government. It is as great as the cause of mankind; and I intend, in office, or out, to fight that battle as long as I live.

My ancestors were troublesome Scotchmen; and, among them, were some of that famous group that were known as the Covenanters. Very well, there is the *Covenant of the League of Nations*. I, too, am a covenanter.

Bibliography for Collateral Reading

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Collateral Studies on Speech-Texts

On Wilson's *War Message to Congress*

I. What internal evidence is there that Wilson was familiar with: (1) Article I, Sec. 8, Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, of Federal Constitution; (2) Webster's version of John Adams's *Speech on Independence* (1776-1826); (3) the concluding paragraph of Martin Luther's *Speech before the Diet of Worms* (1520)—See Bryan's *World's Fam. Orat.* VII, 38-43.

II. What were: (1) the excuse offered by Germany for renewing ruthless submarine warfare within the barred zone—See McMaster's *U. S. in World War,* I, 315-316.

(2) the occasion for the temporary cessation of ruthless submarine warfare between April, 1916, and February, 1917—See McMaster, I, 215-229.

(3) the story of ruthless submarine warfare between Feb. 1 and April 2, 1917—See McMaster, I, 329, 340-341, 349-350.

(4) an instance of German spies working in government offices of the United States—See McMaster, I, 160.

(5) some of the criminal intrigues to destroy our national unity of counsel—See McMaster, I, 170-171.

(6) some of the intrigues to destroy our domestic peace—See McMaster, I, 174-175, 182.

(7) the intrigues to destroy our peace with foreign nations—See McMaster, I, 167-170, 357-359.

(8) the intrigues to cripple our commerce—See McMaster, I, 160-162, 183.

(9) the intrigues to cripple American industry—See McMaster, I, 183, 185, 190, 192.

(10) the intercepted note to the German minister at Mexico City—See McMaster, I, 343-344.

(11) the means that the President had in mind for restraining disloyal German-Americans—See Paxson's *Recent Hist. of U. S.* 497-498.

On Wilson's *Kansas City Speech for the League of Nations*

I. What articles in the *Covenant of the League* provided for: (1) submission of disputes to arbitration—See McMaster's *U. S. in World War,* II, Appendix D; (2) boycotting nations that refused to submit disputes; (3) protection for such nations as an independent Philippines?

II. What were: (1) other great documents of human history with which Wilson would compare the Covenant; (2) the opportunities Wilson had had for judging whether his principles were accepted by the peoples of Europe—See McMaster, II, 254-269.

III. Who were: (1) the great men who represented the peoples of Europe—See Paxson's *Recent Hist. of U. S.* 560; (2) the prominent foreign leaders for a league of nations—See McMaster, II, 270; (3) the Secretary-of-State who negotiated the thirty arbitration treaties—See Paxson, 430; (4) some of the men whom Wilson would have been pleased to see gibbeted—See Paxson, 469-470; (5) the troublesome Scotch Covenanters—See Green's *Short Hist. of England,* Chap. VIII, Sec. V.

IV. When had Wilson held conferences with his opponents to explain the Covenant?—See McMaster, II, 389-390, 395-400.

V. What evidence is there that the Republicans in 1921 attempted to meet Wilson's challenge to get together the counselors of the world to do something better?

Dictionary Studies from Woodrow Wilson

Know the pronunciation, derivation, definition, connotation, and idiomatic usage of:

1. accredited 2. amuck 3. animus 4. autocracy 5. compassion 6. concert 7. conjecture 8. countenance 9. deem 10. domain 11. extirpate 12. fealty 13. gage 14. hostile 15. identity 16. indemnities 17. instigation 18. intrigues 19. meager 20. nullify 21. pawns 22. policy 23. non-combatants 24. punctilio 25. rancor 26. retaliation 27. ruthlessly 28. temperateness 29. vindication 30. wanton.

1. arbitration 2. boycott 3. counselors 4. covenant 5. genuine 6. gibbeted 7. illustrates 8. *ipso facto* 9. jaundiced 10. process 11. read out.

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